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LET ME REST.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

I am weary; let me rest
Underneath the nodding clover,
With the grass upon my breast,
And the daisies bending over.
O, the thought is strangely sweet,
Rest, and peace, secure from sorrow,
And the tramp of busy feet,—
Rest that breaks in no to-morrow.

I am weary; let me sleep
With my hands upon my bosom;
But, I pray you let me keep
In their clasp some little blossom.
I have loved earth's flowers well;
Sweet the friendship they have given;
Are the rose and asphodel
Half as fair, that bloom in Heaven?

I am weary and would rest;
As a child in sorrow grieving
Finds, upon its mother's breast,
Peace, in her great love believing,
To the fair, green breast of earth
Turn I, weary, tired and lonely,
For the rest that I shall find
On her gentle bosom only.

AGNES AYRE.

A Tale of the Times of Marion and Sumter.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY BURR THORNBURY.

COLONEL MARCHESTER IS AGAIN TAKEN PRISONER.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRISONER.

Colonel Marchester, dangerously wounded, was in the hands of the enemy. He had given his name, but not his rank, to his captors. A portion of the force against which Marion's attack had been directed, had escorted Captain Gordon to within a short distance of his home, and belonged to his regiment. Clifford Ayre and his party had not fallen in with the pursuing dragoons, but the next morning they learned that a skirmish had occurred, and that several prisoners had been taken. Herbert saw them, learned their names, and was surprised to find that of Walter Marchester among them. A regiment whose Colonel bore that name had surrendered at Charleston, but the commander himself was not one of the number. Could it be possible that this man, taken in a petty assault on a temporary out-post, was the absent Colonel. He looked fit to command a regiment—yes, or an army.

Clifford Ayre had come storming back from his fruitless march for his daughter Preparations for a more extended search were being made. The county was to be secured in every direction.

"She has gone to some of her rebel friends," said the tory, "and with them to the swamps. Curse the fellows! Are they never to be subdued? And to think that Agnes is in such affinity with them—the rebellious jade!"

Mrs. Gordon was shocked to think that her niece should seek the protection of a camp. It was terrible; but she bore the trial with her usual high-bred equanimity.

Her son, as we have seen, had gone to the post where the prisoners were confined. He had obtained a squad of his troopers to assist in the search, and to shoot a few whigs if they should happen to meet them. Returning, he mentioned incidentally the name of the chief prisoner and the circumstances of his capture.

"Walter Marchester!" exclaimed Clifford Ayre, a demoniac smile showing on his features. *Fate* is not always ankind. Walter Marchester! a Colonel absent from his command. Good! He shall die—he shall die the death of a *spy*," he concluded, with malignant energy.

Surprised at his uncle's vehemence, the Captain inquired its cause.

"Walter Marchester is my personal enemy, boy; my enemy and yours. That is sufficient. He shall die."

The nephew saw nothing to object to in this last proposition; the fewer rebels the better; but he was curious to know why his uncle should be so bitter against this man of whom he had never heard, till chance had made him acquainted with his name. He got no immediate satisfaction from Clifford Ayre, though.

"The girl must be found, Herbert. Proceed on the search immediately—though as a lover, you should have exhibited a little more anxiety on her account before this."

"I am sure I am concerned for her ladyship, uncle," returned the Captain, slightly cut by the sneer in the words. "She may fall in love with some rebel officer—and then what would my chance be. She likes me little enough now."

The two separated, the elder going directly to the British camp. His enemy should not escape him this time, he would make sure of that. He did not see the prisoner—he did not wish to see him; but he learned of his condition, and was informed that every precaution would be taken to guard against rescue. There was no danger of his attempting to escape—it was yet doubtful if he would survive his wound.

But he lived and grew better, and in a few days was removed to Georgetown. And then, at Clifford Ayre's instigation, steps were taken, upon his sufficient recovery, to have him tried and hung as a spy. The matter was simple enough. Hale and Hayne and other noble patriots had suffered in that way. Captured, without his uniform, outside of the city in which was his regiment, for what could he hope?

Two weeks later and Marchester was notified of what would be his probable fate. His wound had now ceased to give him pain, and was rapidly healing. Strength was returning to his limbs, and if he had been free he would have announced himself ready for further service. He was willing to die for his country; the ignominious death of a spy if need be; but he resolved not to suffer thus unjustly if he could escape. His services in the good, but almost despairing cause, would now be more valuable than ever. The natural love of life also asserted itself, though with him the ties that bound to existence were fewer than with many. But he would gain his freedom if possible, and he began to plan an escape. He was closely guarded, but not bound; his supposed weakness from his wound exempting him from that. He saw the advantage that deception in this respect, now that he was growing stronger, might give him, and he feigned continued debility.

Col. Marchester was a man of superior resources in a lengthened trial or in an emergency. He saw the way to end a difficulty or a dilemma quickly and clearly if there was a way, and no one was swifter or surer in the execution of his plans. More than once in the army had his keenness and coolness averted disaster, and turned discouragement to success. But in his present position he saw little opportunity to act. His surveillance was unremitting; he was guarded as if he had been Greene or Washington himself. There was, no doubt, a personal agency in this—Clifford Ayre had prompted this unceasing vigilance.

The prisoner was sure that the British line at Georgetown was not guarded with half the care that his own prison door was watched. Once past the sentinels that paced near, he felt that he could count on escape from his more numerous but less vigilant enemies in the camp. There was a lull in the activity of the partisan generals in the vicinity. The British began to think that in common with many others they had given up the struggle, and their vigilance in guarding against surprise was accordingly somewhat relaxed.

But only the most daring movement could save Colonel Marchester, and he prepared himself to make it. One evening the commandant of the place—Colonel Watson, we believe, at that time—came to visit him, accompanied by an Adjutant.

"It is my duty to inform you," said the officer, "that your trial will come off to-morrow, and that an unfavorable verdict will be followed by an immediate execution of your sentence. Such are my orders and I must obey, though I regret exceedingly that one gifted with such a goodly frame of manhood as you should suffer in such a way."

"I thank you for your sympathy," said the patriot. "But since it is necessary, I can suffer death without murmuring, though I am innocent of the offence for which I will be arraigned."

Marchester had arisen as he spoke, his gallant figure towering in the room. His eyes as he spoke were fixed calmly upon the officer. No tremor was in his voice, no agitation in his frame; yet in that moment he had conceived a desperate plan of escape. As he ceased speaking, he glanced at the Colonel's sword, which hung at his side. He snatched it from its scabbard, and before the astonished soldiers, who supposed the prisoner was still weak from his wound, had recovered themselves, he sprang past them, dealt a terrific blow upon the head of the first sentinel he met, served the next in a similar way, turned the corner of the strong log building in which he had been confined, and before the camp was fairly alarmed had passed the loose line of pickets, and was away once more to liberty!"

"Ye gods! what strength for a wounded man!" cried the Colonel, who more surprised by the audacity of the movement than he had ever been before in his life, had rushed out in time to witness the discomfiture of the second sentinel.

"Arouse the camp!" he shouted.

Guns were fired, rockets went blazing up into the air, and instantly the whole camp was in commotion. Sabres clattered, officers swore and shouted, and squads of dragoons were soon thundering in the direction taken by the escaped patriot.

It was now dark. Welcome were the gathering shadows to the fugitive. They enabled him to evade his numerous pursuers, the tramp of whose horses' feet was often heard near him. Had it been day, no earthly chance of escape would have been his. He did not attempt immediate flight from the spot he had now reached, but lay concealed in a thicket till the ardor of pursuit had abated. Toward midnight he heard some of the returning troopers pass near him, giving expression to their disappointment at not having apprehended him. He crouched low in the bushes, and when another hour had passed, arose and struck out boldly for the Santee. He could not hope to reach that stream by morning, and he knew that by day new dangers would beset him, yet he felt strong and hopeful, thanked Heaven for his escape, and went rejoicingly on his way. When morning came, he secreted himself as best he could, for the country was generally open, and afforded little opportunity for unobserved progress. His place of concealment was near an unfrequented road. A low growth of bushes bordered it for some distance, and a clump of trees stood near the centre of the wide and straggling hedge. At the foot of these a spring bubbled up, and it was to slake his thirst that the fugitive had approached the spot. No other refreshment could be obtained, and he felt the need of this. The region around was lonely, and here he resolved to pass the day. The long hours wore on; the setting sun threw its level beams across the land, and a sultry stillness succeeded the glare of the afternoon.

Marchester was about to resume his flight, when he thought he heard the sound of approaching footsteps. He listened; a body of men were certainly coming down the road. Were they friends or enemies? He looked out. In the twilight he saw a troop of British dragoons and some infantry, nearly a hundred men in all, having in their charge a much larger number of Americans. He sunk down in his covert. As the soldiers and their prisoners approached the spot, a halt was ordered. Great God! if he should be discovered. The British refreshed themselves at the spring, but gave the poor fellows they were taking to imprisonment never a drop, though they were evidently suffering with thirst.

Very still the Colonel lay in his place of concealment. The soldiers had refreshed themselves, but they seemed in no hurry to move on. Some seated themselves by the roadside; some entered the copse. A cry of surprise—a clash of steel—a struggle—and Marchester was again a prisoner! He was placed in the ranks of the others, the word of command was given, and the night march was taken up for Charleston.

CHAPTER IX.

LEAVING CAMP—THE STORMS.

Agnes Ayre and her female friends passed several days in the swamp. They were were safe, for the time at least; they were with honorable men; but their situation was necessarily in a degree unpleasant. Their accommodations were rude, and unfitted for one who, like Agnes, had been accustomed to a luxurious home. She would have continued to endure all this without one thought of complaint, like other heroic women of the times, she would gladly have made any sacrifice, suffered every discomfort, if the necessity demanded it. But the hardships of the patriots were increasing, and might at length become too great for even men to endure. Almost shelterless, with the earth often for their bed, and acorns and wild meats for their food, it was thought best that before the exigencies of the patriots grew more serious, the young lady and her companions should remove to a place of greater safety. In the northwestern part of the state, near the confines of North and South Carolina, dwelt a sister of Mrs. Whipple, and to her it was decided to go. There they would await the result of events, hoping that, though the prospect was discouraging, before many months peace would return. Accordingly, accompanied by Hipson, and escorted by a number of Marion's men till they were beyond probable danger of interruption by unfriendly persons, Agnes and stout-hearted Mrs. Whipple and her daughter left the camp.

"Now mind you take care of yourself, and of Miss Agnes too,—though I'm thinking she's no child—and in a few months I may join you. There's no telling in these times," were the parting words of Mark.

His little wife looked very serious, as well she might, at the prospect of the long separation, and putting her fresh lips to her husband's, the farewell kiss was taken.

And Agnes had her adieus to make—kind ones to the brave men who had given her their protection, and a tender one, a very tender one, to Major Henry Adley, for she parted from him as his promised bride. No longer she felt lonely and distressed in her situation, for with every assurance of the excellence and nobleness of the young soldier, she had become his betrothed, and when the cruel contest was over, as it was the patriot's faith even in that dark hour that it would be, to the release of his country from the tyrant's thrall, he would, if spared, take her as his wife to his Virginia home. And hope was strong in their young hearts, and love brightened the world.

A few trusty men had seen the little party well over the more dangerous portion of the route—the Major had been placed in command of a new expedition against the enemy, and his immediate services were needed, so that he could not accompany them—and bidding them God speed, had returned to the camp.

Without accident or incident the first day's journey was concluded. The afternoon of the fourth day found them near their destination. Under Hipson's guidance everything had gone well. He was fully acquainted with the road, as he was in fact with nearly every road in the state. Mrs. Whipple had also traversed that portion of the country, having visited her sister since the commencement of the war.

The afternoon was intensely hot, as indeed the morning had been, and there was every indication of an approaching storm. That heated and thunder-charged atmosphere would never clear without a strife of the elements. The travellers looked with apprehension at the sky which had already begun to lower, and the mulatto expressed his belief that they were to experience a storm of unusual severity.

"We had better look out for a stopping-place, Miss Agnes," he said. "I don't like the signs—them clouds is blue-black, and they mean mischief. Don't you notice how they go hurrying about as if making it all up among themselves to do their worst?"

"That is just how they look, Hipson," returned Agnes anxiously, struck with the force of his quaint description. "They have a very unusual appearance, and the thunder is already ominous."

"There!" exclaimed Mrs. Whipple as off to the northeast a flash of lightning split the dark gathered mass of clouds A single majestic boom followed, after an interval, and then a distant, dying roll. The air had grown very still, its uneasy sighing that had for some time been heard, quite subsiding. But it was hotter than before, though the sun was obscured; the space between earth and cloud was like a vast heated chamber.

"Where shall we go?" asked the alarmed ladies of Hipson, who was evidently perplexed where to turn. No place of refuge seemed to offer. They were on an open upland, though further on a strip of pine forest spread.

"We must take to the wood," he answered. "See! the storm is coming!"

A fringe of cloud, light as a roll of wool, came blowing up the front of the tempest, leaving the darker masses—the heavier artillery—behind. This foam-like portion, driven by a furious wind soon passed over their heads; the wind roared for a brief time; and then all was silent again. But the darker, slower-driven cloud was approaching, and as it came up a second frowning mass drove toward it from another quarter. They met like two armies of the skies. The scene was awful. Flash after flash of intensest flame, peal after peal of terrific thunder—not long and rolling, but in single bursts like the near explosion of artillery.

Our friends had reached the wood; it was dangerous to enter because of the lightning, but more dangerous to remain upon the exposed upland. The horse of Agnes reared and plunged; he was usually easy to be mastered, but now his fright rendered him uncontrollable. Hipson endeavored to assist his young mistress; he grasped her bridle rein, but his own animal was now unmanageable, and he was forced to let go his hold. Agnes was brave, and she did her best to restrain the frantic beast, but he turned toward the opening they had just crossed, and bore her away in the rain and darkness.

"She will be killed," cried poor Hipson in agony. "Oh! my dear young missus!"

Mrs. Whipple and her daughter, who had dismounted and tied their horses, were terrified almost into unconsciousness; indeed they were before so frightened that they did not comprehend this last occurrence, though the exclamation of the mulatto thrilled them with a new terror.

It was not yet sunset, but the gloom of the storm shadowed the earth like night. Not yet losing her presence of mind, our heroine maintained her seat in the saddle. Down the rough road they had just ascended flew the frightened animal, even yet in a measure guided by his rider. But the main path was at last lost, and a byway leading up the mountain entered. The fury of the storm was abating and it grew lighter. Agnes, astonished at her own intrepidity and surprised that she had not been thrown or injured, took fresh courage and began to regain control of her steed. The rain and thunder ceased and a momentary glow of sunset was about her. Her voice could be heard as she endeavored to sooth and reassure her horse. He paused, trembling, but tractable. Strangely and sweetly in the wilderness were the tones of that brave girl. "Courage, Race," she said. "It has been terrible, but I am with you."

Did the poor brute understand her. A pitiful neigh was his answer. The transient light of sunset departed. The thunder was muttering again, proclaiming another storm. Where was she? Whither should she turn? Where was Hipson and the others? Despair was seizing upon her strong soul at last, when an exclamation of surprise—of infinite wonder—caused her to start and look up. A strange, hunter-looking man had just emerged from the forest to the by-path. He carried a rifle, and the manner in which he held it, the attitude into which surprise had struck him, the expression of his features, formed a representation of the most picturesque amazement.

CHAPTER X.

RAPP, THE RANGER.

"Wall, I never. Ghost or human?"

These words came at length from the man who had been so startled at the beautiful forest apparition. Agnes would have been glad to meet almost any human being then, but the sight of the person before her gave her unusual joy. There was nothing evil in his appearance; on the contrary, his rough features were kindly and assuring in their expression.

"I am lost in the forest," said Agnes.

"Wall, I never; I should think you was," spoke the man.

"My horse ran with me, frightened by the lightning. Could you conduct me to shelter for the night?"

"Come with me at once, gal. There's another storm a comin'." He took her bridle rein and led the horse further up the mountain. He did not speak, but went steadily on. There was no time for words. A deep darkness was rapidly settling around, through which the flashes of the not distant lightning gleamed. Going a short distance up the road, the man turned abruptly to the left and soon came to a small clearing, on which stood a rude cabin, and a much ruder shed or stable. Stopping at the door of the dwelling, the guide assisted Agnes to dismount, called to some one inside, and when the person appeared, said:

"Here, Bloom, I've brought a lost traveller. I don't understand why sich as she should ever come to these parts," he muttered to himself. "Take her in an' don't ax her no questions, for she's nigh about dead with skeer an' wet, I take it."

A woman had come to the door. Her name it seemed was Bloom, but she was anything but blooming in appearance. She wore a dress of the coarsest homespun, and was barefooted.

Choking down her surprise on seeing who it was that was thrown upon her hospitality, she said, in tones of sympathy:

"Come, child; you're safe here, and let me make you comfor'ble."

A fire was smouldering on the hearth, which quickly leaped into a cheerful blaze when a few dry pine knots were placed upon the coals. By this time the storm had burst with a greater fury even than at first; the rain came down in floods, though the thunder was less startling.

Having placed the horse in the stable, the man who had so opportunely discovered our heroine in the wood, entered the cabin.

"It's gladsome, miss," he said, addressing Agnes, "that you're not out on the mountain to-night. Ev'rything's let loose, an' a-fore mornin' there'll be deestruction enough."

"I am very grateful to you for your kindness, sir," returned Agnes. "It would be fearful to be exposed to-night—and I am greatly concerned for my friends."

"You was not alone, then? though I might ha' knowed that."

"No, sir; I had three companions, and it may be they are suffering as I would have suffered had you not seen me and conducted me here."

"How far was it that your critter carried you? Maybe I mought be of some service to the rest," said the man, rising, as if to go out.

"Nearly a mile, I should think. It would certainly be very dangerous for any one to venture out to-night; and yet"—the speaker hesitated, not wishing to suggest a search for her friends, but feeling a fearful anxiety on their account.

"And yet," spoke the kind-hearted stranger, interrupting her, "I'll go. I'm used to sich things. I couldn't rest, Miss, if I thought anybody was near needin' help. Where did you leave your folks?"

Agnes informed him.

"I know the spot well. And where was you thinkin' o' stoppin', had the storm not spiled your kalkerlations?"

"At Bartol's—that was our destination. It was not distant, they said."

"At Gill Bartol's?" exclaimed the mountaineer. "Why, that's only a half-mile furder. It's like they're there now."

"O, I hope so; but Hipson—my servant—would search for me."

"I'll go," said the man. "Leastwise to Bartol's. It's not far across, though I'm doubtful about crossin' the gullies—they're rivers to-night."

"You had better not venture," said Agnes. "You will peril your own life, without benefit to them. I will try to think my friends are safe, since they were aware it was so near to our destination."

"Here goes for a trial howsomever. If I find the water dang'rous, I'll soon be back."

He opened the door; the roar of the rain was fearful. The mountain torrents, now fully gathered, came tumbling from above.

"It's no use, I fear, but I'll go a little ways jest to see what it's like."

"Be keerful, Barnwell," was the parting injunction of the woman. "I hain't much fear for Barnwell, though," she added consolingly. She closed the door and returned to her seat.

"Your husband is both kind and brave," said Agnes. "May I inquire his name?"

"Certain, child," said the woman, delighted at the question, for now the way was open for a similar inquiry of her interesting guest. An unusual delicacy had hitherto restrained her in that direction. "His name is Barnwell Rapp—which I allers calls him, not blesvin' in 'breviations, though folks calls him Rapp, the ranger. Might I 'quire *your* name, Miss?" said Bloom, who appeared to have a fondness for the use of "dictionary" words.

"I am called Agnes—Agnes Ayre," answered the young lady, smilingly.

"Wall, now," said her hostess in admiration. "That *is* a purty name."

"Not more so than yours, which I had never heard before," was the pleasant reply.

"Barnwell, he sez it don't fit now no longer, seein' I'm a little withered. Bloom done well enough once, but now it ought to be Fade. Folks does blunder in namin'; there's my Aunt Grace—well, there ain't a more awkwarder—" The old lady's remarks on the subject were cut short by the entrance of her husband. "Taint no use," he exclaimed, removing his dripping coat. "Ev'ry thing's afloat, and I have my doubts about this kyar mountin' not movin' off."

"God help my friends," said Agnes, "if they have not reached a place of shelter."

"Don't worry too much, my gal," said the ranger. "They'll turn up all right in the mornin', pervided we don't all float off."

Agnes had dried her wet garments and partaken of a good meal that Mrs. Rapp had prepared. It was growing late, and her extreme weariness being observed she was shown to a comfortable bed. Her sleep was troubled till near morning, when she fell into a deep and refreshing slumber. She awoke in utter confusion as to her whereabouts. The sun was shining through the low window of the apartment. Gradually the remembrance of her position and of all that had occurred came back. She arose and dressed herself, and going out into the little kitchen of the cabin saw—Hipson! eagerly awaiting her appearance. With a cry of joy she sprang forward, greeting him with a delight that caused the ranger and his wife who were both present to exchange the most meaning and satisfactory glances.

"Oh! I feared you would be lost or drowned, Hipson!"

"And we all gave you up for gone," said the mulatto.

"And the others?"

"Are safe and know that you are."

"How very, very thankful I am," said Agnes, joyfully. "It was a terrible storm and a terrible night. Pardon me, my good friends," she continued, turning to the mountaineer and his wife, and greeting them, "that I have not noticed you before. I was so glad to see—"

"Yes, we know, child, and mighty happy are we to have you so bright this mornin'," interrupted both.

"I wouldn't wake you," continued the woman, "though Hipboss here," (another queer name I must say) she muttered in parenthesis, "was in a squirm' like distress for to let you know he was still alive."

"Not just that, good missus," interrupted Hipson, "I—"

"Never mind," said she. "I wonder if Miss Agnes has any appetite for brekfus? It's nearin' noon though."

"Is it so late as that?" asked Agnes in surprise.

The meal was heartily partaken of. While she was eating, Rapp related how he had arisen very early, gone to Bartol's and there found Hipson, who, after an anxious, and of course unavailing search for his mistress in the darkness, had gone to Bartol's, (whither Mrs. Whipple and her daughter had preceded him,) and passed some hours of the most painful unrest till the ranger's early visit had relieved him of his apprehensions.

About noon Agnes was conducted by Rapp and Hipson to Bartol's, where she was joyously greeted by her companions in the storm, and received a warm welcome from her stranger friends, to whom the circumstances of her coming were explained by the voluble Mrs. Whipple. And now our heroine, after her trials and perils, found in those mountain solitudes rest and present safety. But even there are long the tide of battle was to roll, and the mountain verdure was to be stained with the blood of patriots and their foes.

CHAPTER XI.

A GALLANT EXPLOIT.

Wearily the patriot prisoners, of whom Marchester was now one, took up their march under the watchful guard of their captors. Almost famished from hunger, and worn by the anxieties of his present and previous situation, our friend managed to keep up with his unfortunate fellow-captives. The British were unaware of the rank and importance of their new prisoner, but these would no doubt be revealed when they reached the city or learned of his escape from Georgetown. From a full sense of the danger to which he would be again exposed, Marchester fell into a state of walking unconsciousness, keeping pace mechanically with the others. He was startled by a sudden halt in the line and the quick, sharp commands of the British officers—then confusion and the reports of muskets. The head of the column had entered a narrow pass in the road, a portion of the guard marching ahead, instead of on the flanks. The advance troops had been ambuscaded. From hedge and embankment came a deadly fire, throwing the men into disorder and driving them back upon the prisoners. The rear guard was now also attacked, and the shouts of the unseen foe and their well-aimed bullets struck terror into the hearts of the British.

"Surrender, ye Britons! Surrender, or we will cut you down! Marion's men are upon you!"

A straggling fire from the alarmed soldiers was the only response to this. A shower of balls, discriminating well in the gloom between friend and foe, was poured upon them. A charge was made by the hitherto invisible assailants—and finding resistance useless, the soldiers laid down their arms. Great was the joy of those weary and dejected men to be so suddenly and unexpectedly released. In the darkness they could not see the faces of those who had rescued them—but they knew the Swamp Fox had ventured from his haunts, and joyful was the cheer that welcomed his bold coming. Ninety prisoners, and their arms and horses fell into the hands of the patriots; whose number to the surprise and mortification of the British, proved to be only thirty. Moreover the release of two hundred Americans, being taken to a long and painful imprisonment, was in itself a cause of great rejoicing to the little band. With it had come Major Adley, unknowing that his gallant friend, whom he had given up for lost, was soon to be restored to him.

A soldierly figure passed near Marchester and a voice spoke some words of command. Surely he was well acquainted with its tones.

"Major—Major Adley," he said, stepping toward him.

The young officer started. The address was repeated.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "it is Colonel Marchester!"

"It is indeed I, my dear friend—and I am very glad to meet you."

"We thought you dead. Now Heaven be praised for this."

Their hands had already met in the warm clasp of friends who had thought to meet no more, and further glad words of explanation and greeting were quickly spoken.

"I have not yet seen your face, my friend," said the Major, "and can hardly realize that you are here in the body—but by the light of our camp-fire, toward which we must now hasten, I will satisfy myself that it is your substantial self."

"Rest assured that I am with you as a real presence," returned the Colonel, jocularly, "for I have a very painful sense of my physical existence."

Hurried preparations for retiring were all this time being made; the late prisoners were armed with the weapons taken from their chagrined and silent enemies; the word of command was given; and the patriots sought safety for themselves and their spoils in the low swamp-land, from which they had sallied to this brilliant little victory.

Returning, Marchester gave the Major a full account of his experience since his capture on the field where it was supposed he had been left dead—his wound, imprisonment, the danger to which as a suspected spy he had been subjected, his escape and subsequent recapture. In turn the young officer had much to tell. He spoke of Agnes, of her flight from her home, of his accidental meeting with her, of her sojourn in the camp, and of her retirement under the care of the faithful Hipson to friends on the mountain.

"God bless and protect the brave girl," said Walter Marchester with a fervency that showed how warm was his remembrance of her.

The Major had still more to say. He informed his friend of the sweet relation that now existed between himself and Agnes, and of the causes that had compelled her to leave her home.

"May you be happy—happy as I once was," said the Colonel with a sigh as he thought of other days. "Forgive me, my friend, for making this sad and inopportune reference to my life-sorrow. Not to you will ever come such grief. In your old Virginia home, when the war is ended by our independence, long years of happiness will be yours, and it will give me joy to witness it, for I assure you if I live I shall be often there."

"Indeed you shall—you shall leave your own beautiful but lonely home for ours."

"Have you made anything of the mystery of Clifford Ayre's manner on the occasion of our first meeting with him?" inquired Adley, after a panse.

"I have thought of it much, and at times I am almost led to believe—only it is impossible, impossible," was the reply of Marchester, checking himself as if he feared his conclusions were too unauthorized.

"He is a man of evil, as his child has been forced to think," said the Major, reflecting on the words that Agnes had related as having been overheard by Hipson. "He is a man of evil, it pains me to say, but Agnes Ayre is as pure as she is beautiful and brave. Strange that parent and child should be so unlike."

"Strange, very strange," echoed Marchester, reflectively.

Good progress had been made by the patriots during this conversation—and in an other hour the borders of the swamp were reached. Through miry mazes, by paths that could be safely followed only under the lead of guides thoroughly acquainted with each turn and crossing, the little band and their rescued friends passed to the firm ground of the interior. The prisoners had been disposed of in another quarter—not being brought to the central retreat—where they were securely confined to await exchange.

CHAPTER XII.

CAMDEN, AND AFTER.

While Sumter and Marion kept up the spirits of many of the patriots by a succession of gallant enterprises, a regular force was advancing through the Middle States to the relief of the overrun and oppressed Carolinas. These, consisting chiefly of Maryland and Delaware troops under General Gates, reached Clermont, thirteen miles from Camden, near the middle of August. The sufferings of these men advancing to the relief of their patriotic brethren, were severe and continued; the heat of summer; the unhealthfulness of the climate; insufficiency of food; and the march of many hundred miles through pine-barrens and swamps, over sand-hills and across rivers, greatly debilitating and exhausting them. As the Americans approached, Lord Rawdon withdrew his forces from the scattering posts and concentrated them at Camden. This apparent retreat of their enemies and the appearance of their friends, rejoiced and encouraged the citizens of the Carolinas, weary of the tyranny, insolence, and rapine of the British. Gates displayed great energy in his measures for the opening of the campaign, but the final result showed his incompetency. Lord Cornwallis hastened from Charleston to meet the patriot army—and although his forces were inferior to those of his antagonist, he marched boldly on, intending to attack the Americans in their camp at Clermont. Gates also moved forward in order to obtain an advantageous position, and the advanced parties of the two armies met in the night and engaged. The American cavalry recoiled at the first fire, and threw the whole line of the main body in confusion—but they soon recovered their order and skirmishing continued till morning.

When day broke the battle became general and bloody. At the first onset a portion of the militia gave way, and the fate of the contest was from that moment decided against them. It was in vain that the heroic Baron de Kalb at the head of his brave regulars endeavored to turn the tide of battle in favor of the Americans. They gallantly maintained their ground until, overpowered by numbers, and almost surrounded, it was evident that the day was lost.

Their commander was taken prisoner by Tarleton's cavalry, and died the next day of his many wounds. Thus disaster had again fallen upon the arms of the patriots in the South. The miserable remnant of the army of Gates fled to the northward, and the triumphant Britons again exercised undisputed authority over the State, except when the invincible Marion and his few but gallant followers dared to raise their feeble arms against the tyrant power. The hardships endured by these men were great, but nothing could induce them to forego their determination to achieve their independence, nor mitigate their hostility to the invaders.

In the battle of Camden, Major Adley and his comrades had not engaged. Having no regular command, several gallant Colonels of the State and many minor officers waged a predatory warfare against the British and their Tory allies, commanding, by mutual consent, for a day each, according to their rank in rotation, and rendering excellent service in the cause. In the rear and on the flanks of the victorious foe they hovered; now swooping down upon an out-post, and now ambuscading a party of foragers or cutting off a plundering band that had ventured too far from the main body.

It was toward the close of a sultry day in the latter part of August that our hero, with a score of illy-mounted men—their horses like themselves fared at times slimly—was making his way through a wood that formed the western boundary of a large plantation. Their object was to obtain information of the numbers and position of a body of the enemy, known to be posted some miles to the eastward. The ill-condition of their horses rendered it very necessary to observe caution, for if discovered, the superior fleetness of the animals of the well-mounted dragoons would render their escape a doubtful matter.

"Is there not a smell of smoke in the air, Coppell?" asked the leader of one of his men.

"There is, sir; and it's not from the pines; somebody's building is burning, and not far away."

"Some plundering vandals have no doubt fired it in the manner that Marston's was yesterday. We will look to this. Forward, men, but keep well covered."

They urged their horses to a faster pace for some distance, led by the smoke, that was now growing denser and almost stifling, toward the conflagration. It was now sunset, but still light enough to distinguish objects for some distance.

The roar of the fire was now plainly heard, and the red gleam of the flames seen through the leaves. The band was halted.

"Remain here until I return," directed the Major, dismounting and proceeding alone to reconnoitre.

After a brief space he returned, saying.

"It is as I supposed. A party of the enemy's dragoons have plundered and fired a lot of plantation buildings. Make ready for a charge. They are not yet mounted, and we will endeavor to surprise the rascals. Forward! Follow me!"

The men had remounted, and at the word of command moved forward. The dense black smoke rose like a column, and then, the air being still and moist, settled back toward the earth. Leaving the wood, under this strange cover the rangers advanced, completely concealed from the enemy. They approached with their horses at first in a walk, till the smoke became too stifling to endure much longer, and then, with a wild cheer, burst from the cloudy cover upon the startled troopers. A volley of rifle shots was delivered, and ten of the red-coated group fell to the earth. Like demons from Pandemonium appeared those wild riders, emerging from the rolling masses of smoke to the glare of the conflagration. Terror-stricken by the sudden and desperate attack, the dragoons made no attempt at resistance, a number being taken prisoners, and the others, save the dead and wounded, flying to the wood.

"Well done, my brave fellows!" cried the young commander. "We will furnish ourselves with better steeds at once, and then back to camp for to-night."

The horses of the troopers were seized, and with their prisoners, disarmed, hastily bound, and placed upon the slower animals of the rangers, the little party, each man with a captive trooper at his side, rode back to their retreat in the swamp.

CHAPTER XIII.

BETRAYED.

Rather lonely at times felt Agnes Ayre in that secluded mountain region. Yet she did not wish to return to her home, nor did she find no pleasure in the society of her humble but excellent companions. She merely chafed under the confinement that prevented her from engaging in any active work. She felt that she was idling while others were toiling, and she longed to do a woman's part in the cause of liberty. But it was necessary that she should remain where she was, and she employed herself in such little ways as opened before her, often to the wonder and admiration of those who saw what her white fingers wrought. For Rapp the Ranger she made a beautiful deer-skin suit, with belt and cap; and when the old woodsman was arrayed in his new garb he looked so much the romantic hunter that Bloom, not yet in the secret of the gift, mistook him for her son, who was away with Sumter. As for Barnwell, his pleasure on receiving the present was boundless, and his love and admiration for the fair young creature strengthened to devotion.

"You purty one!" he exclaimed, "to think of sech an' ole coon as me. Lord bless the gal!"

Often she visited the ranger's cabin to chat with him and his withered wife, with her strange name of Bloom, to call her which was no more appropriate than to call a dead leaf a living flower.

"You're mighty lonesome, child, here on the mountain I know, but I'm glad for Barnwell's sake you cum. He's ten years younger nor he was, and still on the back track o' time. Long 'll be the day when you leave us, Miss Agnes," said the old lady one afternoon.

"I shall never forget you, my kind friends. Where I shall turn when I bid you farewell I cannot now say," replied Agnes sadly, and yet hopefully, thinking of the new home to which as a bride she some day might go; "but in cot or hall you shall be always welcome. And yet," she continued, smilingly, knowing the love of the old couple for their simple life, "you could not be induced to go with me to remain from your own little mountain spot."

"No, child, we wouldn't an' we couldn't. Barnwell an' me must breathe the mountain air or die. I tried the town once, up in North Caroliny—at Charlottesville—that's when Barnwell come across me, an' I lived with jest the sweetest lady, Miss Agnes, 'ceptin yourself,—and the saddest one, too,—but we was born on the hills, an' we tuck to 'em again, Barnwell an' me, an' never left 'em since. Ah! the mountain, air, child,—it 'grees with you, too. Don't you know how double rosy you's a gittin? an' you're a heap stronger an' more healthier nor you was."

It was so. The sweet air of the hills and her gentle out-door exercise had given to the soft cheeks of Agnes a bloom so rich, so delicate that were her lover to see her now he would mark with joy the new and radiant beauty of his betrothed. She was fair before, but over the pearl of her complexion the rose-leaf was now laid. Perhaps he would have thought that she bore well his absence, for lovers are quick to pain themselves in such ways, but he would soon have seen that his presence was the thing most necessary to her happiness.

Time passed on, and Autumn glorified the hills. Let us return to the home of Clifford Ayre, for something is there transpiring that vitally concerns our heroine. The violent old Tory, grown more irascible and harsh because of the continued absence of Agnes and his failure to obtain the slightest clue to her whereabouts, was in his library one morning when a servant came to notify him that a stranger had asked to see him.

"A gentleman?" he inquired.

"No, massa, leastwise he hab not a gen'man's looks."

"Show him in here at once."

The servant retired and shortly reappeared conducting the stranger to the apartment. He was lank, sallow-faced, a mountaineer as was evident from his garb and general appearance. His countenance wore a low, sinister expression, and he looked like one capable of treachery and crime. Clifford Ayre was surprised to see such a person before him. He requested him to be seated, but the fellow remained awkwardly standing, twirling his squirrel-skin cap.

"What is your name, sir?" asked the royalist.

"Cress Snyder, sir," was the reply.

"You come from the mountains?"

"Yes sir, and I bring you some powerful interestin' news."

Clifford started.

"Of what nature," he inquired.

"It was a heap o' trouble comin'," said the man, "and reely worth a bein' paid for."

"I see your object." A purse of gold was thrown on the table. "Now speak, and if your communication is of any value you shall have that."

The eyes of the mountaineer glistened with greed.

"Your darter, Mr. Ayre—"

"My daughter—do you know anything about her?" exclaimed the tory, eagerly.

"I can tell you where she is."

"Speak, man, your reward shall be great."

"She is on the mountains."

"On the mountains!" echoed the exited listener.

"I can lead you to her."

"The disobedient, rebellious girl. I will go with you to the spot. But the difficulty, the distance, the danger. The rebels are abroad—"

"Never you fear. I can show you a cl'ar path. Besides the red-coats are a movin' our way. You'll be safe enough."

"Good!" exclaimed Clifford Ayre. "Herbert can be detailed to go in that direction. All will yet be well, provided you are telling me the truth." He looked at the fellow with stern and searching inquiry.

"I'll risk my life on the truth of what I've told ye."

"How did you become informed of what you have related?"

"I kin tell ye a straight story, sir, and I'll speak now if you'll listen."

"Go on."

The man proceeded with his recital. In brief, he was a tory, a malignant, soulless wretch, who, living near the family with whom Agnes and her companions had taken refuge, had through the loose-tongued sister of Mrs. Whipple obtained a partial knowledge of the causes that compelled our heroine to leave home. He knew Clifford Ayre, having years before lived in the neighborhood of Monk's Corner, and, conceiving that the tory would liberally reward any one who would inform him of the young lady's place of concealment, he had basely resolved to betray her.

A searching cross-examination convinced Clifford Ayre that the fellow had told him the truth.

"On King's Mountain, you say? and you will accompany me thither?"

"I will lead you to the spot, else may the red-coats riddle me with bullets."

"They surely shall if it is found that you have lied."

Clifford Ayre's determination was quickly taken. He would communicate with his nephew at once. A strong force of dragoons could probably be obtained for the purpose of an attack on the mountaineers. Indeed, as was soon developed, it had already been planned by the British leaders that the north-western part of the state should be invaded. Major Ferguson was intrusted with the work of punishing the western hunters, who had grown quite too bold and annoying of late. Royal militia were collecting. Clifford Ayre himself would join these with a force that could be readily raised for the occasion. The distance to the mountain was considerable, but it could be overcome. He had fleet horses at hand, and the man who had informed him of what so rejoiced him to know, would guide him to the spot.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

[This fascinating romance was begun in THE SATURDAY EVENING POST of Oct 7th (last week's paper). Send in your orders at once if you wish to secure the opening chapters.]

TAKE NOTICE.—Next week we shall begin a thrilling and adventurous story, the scene of which is laid among the Wreckers of the Cornish Coast. Now is the time to send in your subscriptions if you want to read these great stories from the beginning.

ON SILVER WINGS.

BY THE AUTHOR of "Joyce Dormer's Story."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OVERWORKED.

One of the first things that Jasper Seaton saw, in looking over a pile of papers that had accumulated during his absence, was a London newspaper of some weeks before, in which was chronicled the marriage of Henry Carteret, Esq., barrister-at-law—the ceremony being performed by the Rev. John Carteret, brother of the bridegroom.

The paper dropped from his hand. This, then, was the marriage to which Miss Carteret had, in all probability, alluded. The time corresponded exactly—the date being early in August.

He had been premature in returning to England. How did he know what further revelations were at hand? Fortunately, Broadmead was too sleepy to have its eyes opened very wide upon the outer world; and, as Diana seemed quite passive, it would be easy enough to hurry the marriage, and when that was over all would go well. So Jasper destroyed the paper, and hoped that nothing further would transpire. And again he argued, in the same spirit in which he had argued before, that it was no fault of his if Diana had misunderstood John Carteret's sister. To do Jasper justice, he had been similarly misled; though now he wondered that it had never occurred to him that John Carteret had brothers as likely, or more likely, to marry than himself. If he had not been so thoroughly occupied with the one Mr. Carteret who had brought him so much anxiety, he might have taken it into consideration.

Even now he argued, though against his own convictions, that possibly John Carteret might be married. There was no evidence to the contrary. This marriage of the elder brother did not set aside the marriage of the younger; and, at any rate, he was not called upon to disprove the belief that Diana had so thoroughly accepted.

Jasper held firm to his doctrine. As long as he perpetrated no active fraud, he held himself blameless, and allowed the tide of misconception and false impressions to flow onward, floating him on its waters to victory.

Nevertheless, he resolved to anticipate any disastrous contingencies that might arise. Diana, since her return to Broadmead, had come to look upon her marriage almost with a sense of relief, as putting an end to all the doubts and misgivings that now and then assailed her, in spite of her decision to carry out Madame de Mouline's wishes; and she listened calmly to all Jasper's plans for the future. Therefore, when he—more anxious now to hurry matters—suggested Christmas, Diana acquiesced; and Jasper determined that they would again leave Broadmead, and spend the winter in Cornwall.

Mrs. Seaton was content to follow out anything that her son wished, and Diana cared too little about arrangements to dissent from anything. She only hoped she was doing her duty, and that all might turn out for the best.

"She is too quiet," said Signora Neri to her brother. "I have no faith in marriages where the heart is so undisturbed."

"Mr. Seaton is satisfied," returned Signor Neri; and the child will never have another dream. That is over. Her voice is a true interpreter; and through my art I have discovered much that has been unobserved by thee. She will be happier as it is than in any other way. None will help her through Mr. Carteret's fickleness as Mr. Seaton will: he has known her from a child, and will make all allowances, as none other could."

"I do not comprehend Mr. Carteret," answered Signora Neri. "I cannot believe him to be faithless. There is something wrong, Giuseppe. I know it—I feel it; and yet I dare not hint it to my darling. Why can I not speak, Giuseppe? What holds me back, and chokes my voice? She asks me to come and see her married, and I half give my promise; and yet it seems to me that I must speak out, and forbid this marriage that I dread so much. And still I dare not. What is it, Giuseppe?"

Signor Neri looked at his sister in surprise.

"The old prophetic spirit is returning to the family," he said, half playfully. "The sibyl is coming to life in foreign lands. No, my Cæsola," he continued, more gravely; "be calm—all is in better hands than thine. There is no chance in the happenings of this life; there is a plan whose every line is carefully marked out, and man cannot mend it."

But still Signora Neri did not cease to regret that she had not carried out her wish of writing to John Carteret. It was too late now. If she had only obeyed her impulse! Too late! surely not too late even yet—if she had only known. But John Carteret was lost to the Broadmead world. No one knew where he was—no one cared; and his doings had long been a matter of perfect indifference.

John Carteret, at this present moment, was energetically striving at his work. The gloomy streets, dark with the fog that rain and smoke produced, looked upon no more careworn a face than his. The hue of health had faded out of it, and it had become thin and sharp in its outlines; and though the earnest soul beamed forth and irradiated it when he preached to his congregation, yet the people of St. Anne's felt that their curate was an altered man.

"As unlike Mr. Derrington as possible, he is," said Mrs. Betterton; "and yet I can't help liking him. But one never gets beyond a certain point with him; and, in one way, one doesn't know him much better than the first day he came; and Mr. Derrington was as much at home at our house as if he was in his own. I can't think what it is about the man that makes me like him almost as well as Mr. Derrington himself, that we'd known for years."

Whilst Mrs. Penfold, dusting her rooms and preparing John Carteret's meals, came to the same conclusion as the church warden's wife. Perhaps she went a little beyond—for she declared that the Rev. Carteret was an angel.

"And if any one should know it, it is I as ought to do so, and likewise Joshua. And he's no difficulty with accounts, which was always the Rev. Derrington's failing. Him and Joshua are like brothers in that respect—though, perhaps, not much in others," concluded Mrs. Penfold. For she could not disguise from herself that there the likeness ended—for Joshua, though an excellent son, was "a little short in his temper sometimes," as his mother expressed it, when he came in tired and hungry; which characteristic he had inherited, as she confessed, "from his father, Thomas Penfold, who had his weaknesses as well as his virtues;" whilst, on the other hand, "Mr. Carteret was the placidest gentleman that ever breathed—too good, indeed, to live."

With which sentiment, Mrs. Penfold watched her lodger day by day, and wondered how long mortal man could stand the life he was leading. And yet he appeared to like it, and was very cheerful when he came in—she could not say "lively," as she would have done of Mr. Derrington; and he got through all his work, and did not seem to think of fatigue—though that might be, reasoned Mrs. Penfold, because he had no time to sit down and consider how hard it was.

But, in spite of his contentment, the care lines came into his face, and the sharp outlines grew sharper, telling that mental activity and physical labor were wearing away the man.

To-day, Mrs. Penfold had been more impressed with the fact than usual, and had ventured for the first time to remonstrate.

"If you'd only take a holiday, sir, and go into the country to your friends. You are doing too much—indeed you are, sir."

"My friends live in town, Mrs. Penfold," answered John Carteret; "so I think the change would not be very great."

And a slight flush passed over his face as he thought of the one country place that was ever in his memory.

"Any change would be a rest, sir," continued Mrs. Penford—who, having plunged into the subject, determined to pursue it. "You are working too hard, sir—if you'll excuse me being so bold as to say so."

"Life is work, and work is life, Mrs. Penfold."

"And work is death likewise, sir; and yours is too precious a life to be thrown away."

Again the flush passed over his face. He might himself have thought so once; but that was over now. Then he almost started, for Mrs. Penfold's words opened his eyes to a phase that he had not seen before. Perhaps he had been caring too little about life lately. What right had he to be regardless of it? Life was a great and beautiful gift—not to be got rid of, not to be worn out before the time; but to be used wisely and well, until the time should come to restore it to the Giver—"Until I come to claim mine own, with usury." Possibly there was some truth in Mrs. Penfold's remark.

"I will think about it," he said, meditatively, as he went out.

"Ay, when it's too late," thought Mrs. Penfold. "But whoever would have thought that I would have spoken up as I have done—and he have taken it, too, quite seriously."

It was a damp autumn, and there had been much sickness about. John Carteret, fearless of infection, believed himself to be fever-proof, and took but few precautions. He went into close, hot, unhealthy rooms, and came out of them into the raw, unwholesome atmosphere. He got wet through; and in his wet clothing went from house to house, and came home to take a hasty meal, and half dry himself at the blazing fire that his landlady never failed to have for him; and then went out again, to minister to the sick and dying.

"Mortal man can't stand such work for ever," repeated Mrs. Penfold—as, having worked herself into a greater state of anxiety than usual, she opened the door from time to time, and peered into the drizzling fog, trying to see whether, up or down the street, Mr. Carteret was yet coming. He was later than ever this evening. He had taken a hurried dinner in the middle of the day, and had gone off again before she had been able to speak to him.

"And he ought to be in early to tea—for this is his sermon night."

And Mrs. Penfold dusted the easy chair anew, and poked the fire; and then went into the kitchen to see if the kettle boiled.

At last he came, looking so ill, that Mrs. Penfold involuntarily exclaimed—

"It's come at last, as I knew it would; and there's no one in all the parish worse than yourself, sir."

"I shall be all right when I have had my tea, Mrs. Penfold. It's my rest night to-night, you know."

And he seated himself by the fire, and shivered violently.

Mrs. Penfold looked at him for a moment, and retired.

"There'll be no sermon to-night," was her comment; "nor yet on Sunday, nor a good many Sundays. If the doctor were to call in unawares, Joshua, my mind would be better satisfied," said Mrs. Penfold to her son.

"Is Mr. Carteret ill?" asked Joshua, springing up.

"He don't think so, but *I* do," answered Mrs. Penfold. "He'll never send for the doctor of his own accord. What had better be done, Joshua?"

"I'll go for him at once, mother."

And Mrs. Penfold's mind did not misgive her for taking a liberty, even when she heard the door close after her son, and knew that his recall was hopeless. She was not wrong in her surmises. John Carteret was ill, and it would be many Sundays before he would be able to do his work again, if at all. So the doctor said, looking very grave meanwhile. It might be the fever setting in; and if so, he had so prostrated his strength that the doctor feared the worst.

"Fever!" ejaculated Mrs. Penfold.

The doctor looked sharply at her; something evidently struck him, that he was reasoning out in his own mind.

"Fever," he repeated. "If you are at all afraid, it might not be too late to move him; but it must be done at once. He might be better at home, perhaps," he added, musingly.

"Move him! Turn him out in such a state as he is in, sir! Do you take me for a heathen? After having had such as him in my house for well upon two years, do you think I don't know my duty better, sir?"

"I meant no offence," replied the doctor, seeing that Mrs. Penfold's wrath was rising. "Fever's a bad thing to get into a house, and you've your living to make. And with care, it might do Mr. Carteret no harm to move him; and—" but Mrs. Penfold's face prevented his adding, "and he might be more comfortable at home."

"You leave me to make my living as I please, sir, and to know what's best about it. And as to Mr. Carteret's running the least single chance of a risk through me, he won't do it, sir. If he had fifty fevers, I'd keep him and nurse him through them as well as any hospital nurse or doctor in the town. And Joshua will be as devoted as any slave. It's wonderful how fond he is of Mr. Carteret."

"Where are his friends?"

"In London, sir."

"You had better give me the address, and I will write to them."

"And—"

"I'll be in by midnight, to see how he is. I shall know by then. But in any case, his friends must be written to."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A rooted sorrow—The toothache.

☞ A man in the *right* place—An editor.

☞ "Not at home."—An out-and-out lie.

☞ Christine Nilsson has been honored by having her name affixed to a coal scow on Lake Michigan.

☞ It is said that the reason why young clerks start so much at pretty girls, is because their business requires them to "have an eye to figures."

☞ An elopement at Elizabeth, New Jersey, was frustrated by the perfidy of the confidant, who used the opportunity to steal the bride's hastily-prepared trousseau.

☞ Nearly all women like soldiers, and some would like a good offer-sir.

☞ There are only sixteen persons announced to lecture on the Yo-Semite this winter.

☞ A small gentleman, who has this season won the hand of a widow at Saratoga, has been disrespectfully called "the widow's mite."

☞ A paper out West advertises "peacocks, peanuts and pianos, grand square and upright."

☞ The latest idea is to have the instep of ladies' boots padded, so as to give the high, arched appearance which is so much admired.

☞ SCENE—*Three little children fishing—two boys and a girl*—Elder Boy:—"Oh, Johnny's got a bite!" Girl:—"Oh! my sakes, and he's such a little boy—only reads the primer!"

☞ "Women, Wake Up!"—*Resolution.* Yes; and plague it—turn out and make a fire, and put the tea-kettle on!

☞ Dr. Livingstone has died so many times this last few years, that people are beginning to call him Dr. Deadstone.

☞ Capoul, the tenor, engaged for the Nilsson troupe, is said to be very handsome, and parts his hair in the middle. He will surely please the ladies.

☞ An Illinois lover closed his letter to his lady sentimentally as follows; "My best loved one, I chawed the postage stamp on your last letter all to thunder, because I knew you licked it on."

☞ The fashionable folly in England, is still for ladies perfectly sound in their limbs to imitate the lameness of the Princess Alexandra. To render the imitation more easy of performance, the heel of one shoe is made considerably lower than that of the other. The gait thus produced is known as the Alexandra limp.

☞ They are trying to make us believe that the mosquitos are so plentiful in the Adirondacks that they can't all get on a stranger at once, and so they stand around in reliefs and wait for their turns like customers at a barber shop.

☞ The minister who boasted that he could preach without notes, didn't mean bank notes.

☞ Ladies who use powder ought not to wonder if they are occasionally "blown up."

☞ A Cincinnati horse-doctor advertises to teach a horse to sing. But we have enough one-horse singers already.

☞ AN IRISHMAN'S PLEA.—"Are you guilty, or not guilty?" asked the clerk of arraigns to a prisoner the other day. "An' sure now," said Pat, "what are you put there for but to find that out?"

☞ A silver saw-mill, to be run by tea or coffee, was a Western bridal present.

☞ Twenty-one years ago, a dweller at Cape Ann engraved his name upon an old-fashioned copper cent. It was returned back to him a few days since in the regular course of business.

☞ Horrors accumulate. A companion piece to "Cut off my Curls with your Scissors, Mamma," entitled "Rip my Chignon with your Jack-knife, Papa," has just come out.

☞ A policeman, fond of reading, told a friend, that for amusement, when off duty, he often "took up" a book.

☞ ABSENCE OF MIND.—The last modern instance of absence of mind is that of the Vermont wagoner going to market, who lifted his horse into the wagon and tackled himself into the traces, and he did not discover his error until he endeavored to neigh.

☞ Louisville boasts of an eighteen year old belle who can lift a tub of clothing from the ground to an elevation of four feet, and have the clothes-line white with the results of the labor of her own hands in a short while. Meanwhile, the mother is in the parlor taking her ease in her old age. As soon as this becomes generally known, the railroads running into that city will have to run extra trains.

☞ Some one says that the lion and lamb may lie down together in this world, but when the lion gets up it will be hard work to find the lamb.

☞ A schoolmaster gave out one morning, as a reading lesson to his first class, that portion of the "Merchant of Venice" in which the pound of flesh scene occurs. The reading finished, he asked the class what Shylock meant, when he said, "My deeds upon my head." "Well," said the tallest boy, "I don't know, unless he carried his papers in his hat."

☞ Memphis has produced a girl full of needles, which she pulls out of her flesh with pincers every morning.

☞ A good-natured traveller fell asleep in a train and was carried far beyond his destination. "Pretty good joke this, isn't it?" said he to a fellow-passenger. "Yes, but a little too far-fetched," was the rejoinder.

☞ The St. Albans (Vt.) Messenger slings off this paragraph: "We know that autumn is here from the fact that the swallow syndicates discuss the question when to homeward fly, and the yellow pumpkins now dot the rural landscape like golden nutmegs on the sands of Ophir."

☞ The Mississippi River is reported to be so low that captains of steamboats are having tires put on the paddle-wheels of their craft, and cow-catchers attached to the bows.

☞ "What substitute can there be for the endearments of one's sister?" exclaimed Mary. "The endearments of some other fellow's sister," replied John.

☞ The Egyptians thought they had discovered the secret of long living in the constant use of emetics. Among them it became the custom to take about two emetics a month. When an Egyptian met another, the common greeting was not "How do ye do?" but "How did your last emetic operate?"

☞ The great secret of success in life is, for a man to be ready when his opportunity comes.—*Disraeli.*

☞ A music dealer in an Eastern town announces in his window a sentimental song, "Thou Hast Loved Me, and Left Me for Twenty-five cents."

☞ Owing, probably, to the open sleeves, long-wristed gloves are growing more and more in favor. The two-button, however, are the prettiest for the street. Four and six-button ones are worn with full dress.

☞ The editor of the Cape Ann Advertiser naively says: "The business men of a Western town have presented to their editor a fine horse and buggy, as an evidence of their appreciation of his paper. We hope there will be no such trick played upon anybody here in Essex county."

RETROSPECT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARIE S. LADD.

We were wandering, you and I,
In the grove beneath the hill—
Faint as any zephyr's sigh
Came the sounds from Rowen Mill;

And a little prattling stream
Just beneath us on did creep,
Drowsy nature, half a dream,
Sang or murmured in its sleep,

And your voice was sweet and low,
Tuned to nature's softened mood,
Like the cadence in its flow,
Of the music in the wood.

Soft and low you breathed to me
Loving words I thought them true,
And in turn and trustingly,
I confessed my love for you.

How you changed I will not say,
All I cannot now repeat,
And I would not bring to-day
Forth the pain of hope's defeat;

But you changed; we wandered wide,
Silence dwelt betwixt us twain—
Now once more you seek my side,
And you ask my love again;

Time, you say, its lesson taught,
That, above, you loved me yet,—
Time to me has also brought
Lessons I cannot forget.

In my heart with painful throes,
Love I held for you once died,
When in that old time you chose
To throw the worthless gift aside.

Now to give what you would take
Would but be an effort vain,—
It for you cannot awake,
Love once dead to'er lives again.

A MESALLIANCE, SO CALLED.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARY E. WOODSON.

"I am fearfully, desperately, even *fearfully* in earnest, Annie!" said Lawrence Percy, with an odd admixture of admiration and impatience to the young girl at his side.

"Did you ever hear how easily the crocodile weeps?" asked Annie Williams, with a provoking smile.

"For God's sake desist!" said the young man passionately. "Reject me with cool indifference, or even with anger if you will; but do not mock me with contemptuous levity. I will own that when I first came home and found you wandering—a second Maud Muller by this stream, I had the judge's admiration, without the judge's honesty; and I began to make love to you, as an amusing pastime, never reckoning on any consequence. I fancied, if I thought at all, that Annie Williams—the miller's daughter, ignorant of the world's ways, and the world's iniquities—would be at least as easily won by the flatteries of the young heir of "Howsalow" as some of the daintily raised ladies of fashion have been. You have held out so bravely against an obstinate siege that I instead have surrendered, as I might have done to the best of them, and I love you a thousand times more. The world may prate of the disparity in our positions—you yourself have spoken of it—but, as God is my judge, I humbly confess you my superior in all the cardinal virtues with which He has endowed us! And I ask you to be my wife, with the earnestness of a man who excells you in nothing but the wealth which you begin to make him despise, and who would *feel* honored by such an association."

"Supposing you to be in earnest, which I am not over ready to do," replied the girl with a touch of pride, "how long would such an 'honor' stand the test of your proud sisters' ridicule, when they had begun to badger you about your *plebeian* fancy—with suggestions of a 'barrel of flour' for your coat of arms? My brother Eddie overheard Miss Constance telling you and your friend, Harold Godwyn, that the beauty of my complexion might be largely ascribed to the amount of flour or meal dust in circulation about the mill."

"Confound Constance and Eleanor for a pair of gossiping old maids!" said Lawrence Percy, angrily. "They are always thrusting their long noses where they are not wanted. They'd give all the fine silk dresses they ever expect to have, and whole apothecaries' shops of French cosmetics to boot, if such sacrifices could transform their jaundiced complexions to the snowy whiteness of yours. Don't waste time talking of them. You need never speak to them if it would not be entirely agreeable to you. Constance is going to *buy* a husband with her money next month; and I dare say Eleanor will soon follow her example. Only remember how happy you would make me, or at least tell me that you don't think me a hypocritical scoundrel, Annie?" and the young man looked anxiously down into the fresh young face.

"My unbelief needs 'helping,' when you yourself have taught me the only mistrust I have ever known," she returned, with something between a sigh and a smile.

"I don't deserve to be reproached with that," said the handsome young fellow as he sauntered along, perhaps rather closely at her side. "Touched by the guileless purity of your nature—so different from much that we had been accustomed to in the neighborhood of a college, I was honest in warning you not to trust too much to thoughtless boys like Godwyn and myself. But you have wrought a strange metamorphosis in me in the two years I have known you. I will even confess that worldly considerations have made me struggle against my 'infatuation'—since you have so termed it; but it is of no avail. I have left home, and have mixed in the fashionable circles of our large cities. I have seen beautiful women; and when I have felt the fascination of their charms most potently I have compared them with my little maid of the mill; and, by heavens! the best of them have suffered by the contrast."

"Absence threw a softening halo over defects that would otherwise have been but the more glaring," said the girl, with the first tremor in her usually clear, merry voice. "Ah! why do you still try to convince me, when it is best for us both that I should ever fancy you jesting? Were I foolish enough to listen to you, and mad enough to consent, you might even consummate a rash marriage with me; but your friends would jest about my humble origin, and you would be ashamed of me. Your friend, Mr. Godwyn, salutes me as, 'Miss Hopper—the miller's daughter.'"

"Like his cursed impudence," muttered Lawrence, indignantly.

"And then," said the girl, excitedly, "I should have the bitter reflection that I was not alone responsible for my own unhappiness,—no great matter, perhaps,—but for yours. And I should wish I had been drowned in the mill race, before I ever saw you. You are young still, you will forget me, as I perhaps shall do you; and you will marry some fine, grand lady; and then, if you remember poor Annie Williams at all, you will thank her, with all your heart—for —for,"——and her voice broke down, and she wept, for a moment, unrestrainedly, covering her face with the dainty muslin apron that had looked so fresh and sweet in Lawrence Percy's eyes, when he had found her by the river's side.

"Annie, darling," said the young man, eagerly, endeavoring to detain her, "I would not exchange the hope awakened by those tears for the whole world."

"No, no," she said, quickly. "Mr. Percy, I *must* not, will not listen to you. My purpose shall be the same, if my heart is broken in the struggle. Hush!—I hear father calling. It is late, and he will be angry. I shall not come out here any more, and I hope you will not try to see me again." The girl turned hurriedly away, as a rough voice, calling—"Annie!" "Annie!" came through the evening's air, discordantly above the soft murmur of the river.

"I am here, father." She had retreated but a few paces, when a large, roughly-clad man, with a straggling beard and a coarse felt hat, whitened, indeed, with the dust of the mill, joined them under the trees.

"You tarry late, girl, with your *fishing*; but you have fine company, I see, and I don't wonder that humble folks like you, should *forget* themselves. Go back to your mother." The girl passed him, her head hung blushingly down, and the miller turned, sternly, to the young man.

"*You are fishing, too, Master Percy;* but angling after human souls is a dangerous business. Rather than find my daughter drifting into any of your fine gentlemen's nets, I would sink her, with my own hands, and then hurl her off into the river, like any other, idle cumbersome wreck. Take warning."

"Stop, sir," said young Percy, advancing. "If I prove the ruthless scoundrell you hint at, let *me* be your victim. I have found your daughter so true to herself and you, that I honor her as profoundly as I could do a queen; and I have asked her, in loyal faith, to be my wife."

The miller looked at him long and fixedly, but the noble young man flinched not, and the father's voice lost its harshness, and became almost as soft as the daughter's.

"You may think that now, sir, because you have been looking on a pretty, young face; and it *is* a pretty one; but you would be ashamed of her, by-and-by, and my little bird would pine away in her fine cage. What did *she* say?"

"Just what you have done, sir, she refused me!"

"The child is wise beyond her years," said the miller proudly,—"Annie!" "Annie!" he called again; and a few long strides, with the young man at his side, brought them up with her again, on the little path. "Annie, Master Percy tells me that he has been good enough to forget the difference between you, and has asked you to be his wife. Is it so?"

"Yes, father," she replied, trembling like the autumn leaves around them.

"And that you had refused him, which done, you meant that you had refused him once for all, Annie?"

"Yes, sir," rather more feebly.

"Then, Master Lawrence, as you are answered, there is to be no more fishing. And to prevent it, I had perhaps, better look for a distant home."

"No, Mr. Williams" said Lawrence. "There shall be no love making, unless with your consent; but Annie, dear Annie, I shall still hope to win you, for I shall never love any one else," and the young man turned sadly towards the fine house upon the hill, while Williams led his daughter back to the mill.

The rain that had been threatening for several days seemed every moment more imminent, as the twilight deepened, and a sharp east wind blew up the river. Lawrence Percy strolled on, with an evident preference for being alone, until the darkness and an incipient shower compelled him to seek the house.

"Some months ago I should have been looking for you in alarm," said Godwyn with a laugh, as he sat on the portico, cigar in hand, "but I bear in mind what a practical country fellow you are becoming, and how alarmingly interested in breadstuffs. What a capital investment for the miller, if he could only put his pretty daughter in one of his barrels! How much would you bid, Lawrence?"

"Godwyn, my dear fellow, you will understand—for we are old and tried friends—how distasteful such jests are to me, when I tell you that I love the young lady you speak of, and that I have offered in the presence of her father to make her my wife."

"W-h-e-w!" whistled the young man, astonished out of his lazy good breeding into something like emphasis. "Have you thought for instance, what Miss Constance will say?"

"She need have nothing to say in the matter," replied Lawrence slowly. "Miss Williams has refused me."

"Solomon was, I suppose, the wisest man that ever lived, but he was wrong, for the nonce when he said there was 'nothing new under the sun," laughed Godwyn in spite of his friend's seriousness; "but soft! Miss Constance and Eleanor approach."

The entrance of the Misses Percy interrupted the confidence between the two young men but the subject was renewed, when they found themselves again alone in their rooms, and the proud young patrician, Godwyn, rallied his friend so severely upon his infatuation, that Percy began to feel more reconciled to his fate, and retired not so much out of humor with the world, but that it might have been all over with Miss Annie Williams, after all, had it not been for the peculiar circumstances of the next few days.

The next morning the rain came down in torrents. All day, and no speck of sky was visible at sunset. And yet another and another day of *uninterrupted rain*, such as frequently falls in the Piedmont districts of Virginia. The next day the clouds were slightly broken, but the morning's paper from the city reported by telegraph, "*Heavy* rains, above"—meaning towards the mountains we suppose, and the correctness of their report was soon evident, for the river began to rise so rapidly, that every proprietor of "low ground" corn and hay, &c., began to think he might as well dwell on the rocks of Aden, for the good the crops would do him.

"The clouds are thicker again to-night," yawned Godwyn. "I think, Lawrence, as the miller has established a sort of feudal tenure, we had better leave this part of the country as speedily as possible." And Percy with a longing for change, gave a moody assent. The next morning the rain was still falling *fast*. The bottom land was more widely submerged than it had been for years; for it was the beginning of the great flood of 1870, which resulted in the destruction of so many lives, and so many millions of property. At night the houses upon the hill looked like light-houses upon a storm-beaten cliff, and the houses in the valley appeared like little boats tossed on a tumultuous sea.

Higher and higher rose the flood during the night, until the miller's family of whom we write, accustomed as they were to their humble, river side life, arose in alarm, and retreated to the upper dormitory of their house. The lower rooms were filling with the hissing waters, and every now and then enormous snakes, washed from the mountains or meadows above, went dashing by, or eddying round and round in the foaming current. Pretty Annie Williams having felt for a few days past as if life were not worth the having, now in the first moment of real danger, threw her arms around her father's neck and sobbed in terror.

"Hush, my child," said the simple, honest man, "God will have us in His keeping. We can only call on Him now."

At daylight a crowd of anxious watchers had gathered at the water's edge.

"The boat! the boat!" cried Lawrence Percy as he rushed frantically down amongst them. "Where is the fisherman's boat?" It had been left tied in the natural bed of the river—they could see it even now, tossed like a piece of cork on the bosom of the angry, threatening flood, two hundred yards away. There is no help for it; the miller's family must perish. Perish? Pretty Annie Williams!—not while Lawrence Percy lives! Never had she seemed half so dear to him as at that moment. "Godwyn," he cried, as the young man joined them, "I shall die willingly if I can but aid in rescuing her. Leave no means untried."

The next instant he had thrown himself into the hissing torrent of water. They discovered his object too late to prevent him. He was making a mad attempt to get to the boat. The distance was not so great, but the fury of the waves was terrible. They watched him from the shore with the intensest anxiety, at one moment borne yards below the course he had fixed on, and the next struggling manfully back. He had reached the boat at last, and they fancied they heard a shout. Indeed he had loosed the boat, and with that additional impediment—for he had no oars—attached to his body by a rope, he was making his way back, slowly and with terrible difficulty. People ran along the shore half frantic with ropes in their hands. "He will never do it," they cried. He must be met. One powerful man plunged in. Lawrence was advancing bravely, when suddenly something colder than the water struck heavily against him, and looking up with horror, he saw a lifeless human form floating past him, one of the many victims washed by this great inundation from the sandy shores of life into eternity. The touch of that dead body sent such a chill to his heart that he cried out in agony, as if his strength were exhausted. The man had advanced within a few yards of him, when he saw a heavy beam dashed by the waves against the boat, and Lawrence disappeared. He seized him when he rose to the surface, and keeping his head above water, bore him to land. He was insensible, with a heavy cut in the head, from which the blood flowed profusely. While Godwyn and others bent over him, some men seized the boat, and with rough improvised oars rowed on the waves to the side of the miller's house, from whence the family descended through a window to the skiff, and were borne safely to land.

When Annie Williams beheld Lawrence insensible at her feet, and learned that he had received his wound in an effort to rescue her, the little strength that had sustained her in her late trials seemed suddenly to desert her, and she dropped on the ground beside him, moaning out, "He is dead, and will never know how much I loved him."

It was the first confession of a young and tender heart, but it was not the last, for to the disappointment of those who delight in tragedy, Lawrence Percy recovered, and neither the miller nor his daughter being able to urge any further opposition to his just claims, he and Annie were married but a week after Miss Constance had made her aristocratic connection. It was said that Miss Eleanor followed her sister to her new home, declaring she would never recognize her brother's wife. Whether this slight has interfered with the happiness of the young couple we are inclined to doubt, as Lawrence writes regularly to Harold Godwyn from abroad that he has never for a moment regretted his marriage; and that the only unhappiness his wife has ever known arose from the fact that her father obstinately insisted, immediately after their marriage, upon removing to a distant state: but he had pacified her by promising that they should both pay him frequent visits on their return.

READING THE PAPER.

One took a paper, and his life
Was happier than a king's,
His children all could read and write,
And talk of men and things.

The other took no paper, and,
While strolling through a wood,
A tree fell down upon his crown
And killed him, as it should.

Had he been reading of the news,
At home like neighbor Jim,
I'll bet a cent that accident
Would never have happened him.

THE MUTINY.

A Fearful Passage Across the Atlantic.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY HELEN HARCOURT.

In the month of June, 1840, I filled the berth of second mate on one of the few steamships then plying between Liverpool and New York. The art of steam navigation—as applied to the broad ocean at least—was still in its infancy.

In these days of clipper built steamers the passage is easily accomplished in from eight to nine days; but at the time to which I refer, the "Neptune" was regarded as having performed a marvellous feat when, on her first trip, she rode gayly into the harbor of New York, just thirteen days after leaving her dock at Liverpool!

Three hours before the steamer sailed from the former port, on her return voyage, I had no idea of shipping in her. My engagement occurred, as I may say, accidentally.

I had been discharged from my last ship and was idling along the wharves, when I overtook her commander, with whom I had some slight acquaintance.

While conversing, a boy approached and placed a note in the captain's hand.

"Well," exclaimed the latter, as he hastily perused the paper, "what can I do now? "Here's my first mate taken suddenly ill with cholera. What *am* I do? He is a trusty fellow, and I reckoned on him to aid me in keeping the crew in discipline, for they are a rough set. The true old salts won't trust these steamers yet, so we have to take what we can get. I do not like my second mate, he seems deceitful to *me*."

He stamped his foot impatiently, gazing perplexedly on the steamer, the bustle upon whose decks betokened a speedy departure.

Suddenly he turned to me.

"Mr. Herne, you are the man! Come on board! I will put you in the second mate's berth, for of course *he* will have to act as first."

The offer, unexpected as it was, presented too great a temptation to be rejected; so, as I had no wife whose permission I must obtain, I hurried off to my lodgings, paid my bill, bundled my luggage together, and stepped on board the Neptune, half an hour before she sailed.

She was a fine, staunch craft, possessing but one fault that I could see, although to be sure that might prove to be a serious one, and so it *did*; but I will not anticipate.

Her owners had fitted her up at great expense, and all that was possible had been done for the comfort and convenience of the passengers. Large as was their expenditure it was not without its policy, for every inducement was necessary to lead travellers to trust themselves on "the new-fangled machines."

If in this early period of their existence an ocean steamer secured twenty or thirty passengers for one trip, she was considered as remarkably fortunate, the average number being as yet but ten or twelve.

The fault to which I have referred was due solely to the Neptune's builders. A landsman would not have observed it, but to a seaman's experienced eye it was evident that the steamer was *too long* for her breadth of beam.

This in *any* sea-going vessel was no slight mistake, but as regarded a steamer it was especially blameable, as the full weight of her machinery necessarily rested amidships, on the very spot that her faulty construction rendered the weakest.

Still I could not but acknowledge that the Neptune was a good, stout sea boat, and would in all human probability make many a prosperous trip across the "herring pond."

The crew consisted of twenty men, exclusive of the captain, mates and engineers, and a rougher set I have seldom seen.

My first few hours on board convinced me that Captain Clay had good reason to regret the absence of his trusty first mate, for he did not seem likely to receive much support in enforcing the proper discipline from the man who now filled that post.

Jack Briggs was one of the most villainous looking fellows it was ever my lot to meet, and, although, as my superior officer, I was compelled to pay him outward respect, I never approached him when I could avoid it.

Nevertheless, in spite of my ill-concealed aversion, the mate as sedulously sought my company as I avoided his, the very fact of his doing so increasing my growing distrust of the man.

As night set in upon us on our fifth day out my watch was called, and the rest of the crew turned in below, leaving me in charge of the deck.

Giving my men orders to keep a strict look out, I wearily paced the quarter-deck; my head ached, and there was a weight on my spirits, that I endeavored in vain to shake off.

Suddenly, much to my surprise for I had supposed him to be asleep below—the voice of the mate startled me from my revery.

Disregarding my impatient gesture, he joined me in my walk, endeavoring to enter into friendly conversation.

But, in addition to my rooted dislike to my companion, my headache rendered me irritable, and my replies were none of the longest.

So far from resenting my rudeness, however, he bore it all with unruffled good nature. "What is the matter with you, Mr. Herne?" he asked at length. "You seem out of sorts?"

"My head aches badly," I answered.

"There's no fun in that, that's a *fact*. I'll tell you what, you go below, and turn in for half an hour. I will take charge of the deck for you. Maybe you will feel better for a little rest."

Unexpected as was the offer, I did not feel thankful for it! Somehow, it came natural to me to contradict him on all possible occasions, apart from my duties on board.

A moment before I had been wishing that I was free to turn in; *now* I declined the proffer of relief!

"But I insist upon it!" he exclaimed, and he did insist upon it so strongly that my curiosity was finally aroused as to what his motives could be, for desiring my absence, as he so evidently did.

I determined to remain where I was. The mate grew angry at last.

"Mr. Herne go below, sir!" he exclaimed, "Go below and turn in! You wish to make yourself sick, I suppose, and shirk duty to-morrow, but you can't come that dodge over *me*! I *order* you to go below!"

To have disregarded so positive a command, would have laid me open to the charge of insubordination, so I obeyed—apparently.

In reality I paused on the ladder, my head being just below the level of the combings round the hatchway.

The mate's inexplicable conduct had now excited a feeling deeper than curiosity—suspicion within me, and urged by an irresistible impulse, I resolved to see what he would do, now that he had, as he supposed, secured my absence.

The night was intensely dark, and unless he should approach, so as to look down the hatchway, I was secure from detection.

There was a short silence, and then a long, low whistle sounded from the direction in which I had left the mate.

An instant more, and he was joined by one of the watch.

Then I heard his voice, in close proximity to my concealment, else, so low and cautious were his words, I must have lost their sense. "Now, Robbins, that I've managed to get rid of that mar-plot—let's have our talk. We must be quick about it too, for I half believe the fellow suspects *something*, though he can't make out exactly what. He may pop on deck again at any minute."

"I thought you were *so* sure of gaining him over," growled another voice.

"I hoped to, at first, but he's not of our sort, Robbins. I have not dared to hint our designs to him; on the contrary, I've soft-soaped him; but he don't take very kindly to the bait. He hates me, curse him!"

"Let him walk the plank with the others, then."

"That's just what I mean to do, and what's more, we must give him to the fishes this very night! The crew are all ready, you say?"

"Ay! That they are; as hungry for the gold as you could wish. But I thought you said to-morrow night was the time to rise."

"So I did; but I tell you that fellow suspects something; I *know* he does, and he will keep a watch on me. There's no time like the present, in such cases. He will be on deck again in half an hour, and I'll pretend to see a vessel bearing down on us, and so get him forward to the bows; once there we can easily give him a shove overboard; and then we can rush down on the captain and passengers. We shall have no trouble in getting rid of them."

"What!" exclaimed the other, "kill them in their sleep?"

"What would you have, man? Shall we wake them, put weapons in their hands, and ask them to fight us? I tell you I know how these things must be done. Hark ye, Robbins, in an hour we shall be masters of the ship, and each of us be worth ten thousand dollars in solid gold! Just think of that!"

"But you are sure the money is on board?"

"Sure! Didn't I superintend getting the cargo on board? Didn't I see the chests shipped right from the bank? Of course I'm sure. Do you take me for a fool? Look here, Robbins, go back to the watch, tell them what I say, and let them get their weapons from below, and rouse up their mates. Have them all on deck, but *hidden*, until we send honest Mr. Herne to feed the fishes. *Then* they are to rush below with me. Let them secure all they can alive, I want some fun with the cowering wretches. Did you ever see a man walk the plank? No? Well, I'll show you some rare sport, then. Now be off to your post. And—hark ye, Robbins, do you see this bowie-knife?"

"Of course I do," was the reply, spoken, it seemed to me, rather faintly.

"Of course you do! Well, then, tell the men that it is ready to drink the life-blood of the first man who shows the white feather. They have gone too far to shirk, now, and let them remember the gold."

The conversation terminated, and as the speakers moved away, I also left my perilous station on the ladder.

To describe my feelings, as I listened to this diabolical plot, were impossible; my blood ran cold with horror, my powers of thought were paralyzed.

I was conscious of one idea only,—that I must wake the captain, and acquaint him with the imminent danger that threatened us.

To make my way to his stateroom was the work of an instant.

"Captain, captain," I gasped, shaking him by the shoulder. "Wake up, for God's sake, wake up!"

He sat up in his berth, rubbing his eyes and staring vacantly.

"Captain, captain, rouse up!" I reiterated, stamping my foot in my excitement. "There is a mutiny on board—a plot to murder us all!"

He was fully awakened by such startling intelligence, and in a few hasty words I explained all that I had learned of Mr. Briggs's perfidy.

Captain Clay listened in silence; he expressed no suprise, time was too precious to be wasted in idle words, but the dark frown on his face and the sternly knit brows proved that he was fully alive to the awful responsibility devolving upon him.

A single false step might sacrifice the lives of the passengers entrusted to his care; no wonder then that his cheeks grew pale.

But he was not the man to shrink when danger stared him in the face. In a few moments his decision was made.

"Mr. Herne, I believe you always carry a revolver?"

"Yes, sir, here it is," tapping my breast, "a four-barrel."

"That is well! I have one also, and two cutlasses. Do you take one—yet stay, not yet! Look to your pistol, is it all right?"

"Ay! ay, sir!"

"Mr. Herne, I am going to impose a dangerous task on you. Those villains do not expect you on deck for half an hour, you say; suppose you return at once, before they have time to complete their arrangements? It may have the effect of postponing them for to-night."

"So it may, sir," I exclaimed, rising, "I'll go at once."

"In the meantime I will rouse the passengers; fortunately they are all men—and give them the alarm; at the least call from you we will be ready to rush on deck to your support."

"Ay! ay! sir."

The mate was standing near the after hatchway as I approached; he turned sharply at the sound of my footsteps, exclaiming:

"Why, Mr. Herne, I hoped you were asleep by this time! Your head has got better very suddenly. But I'm glad it has, for you are the very man I want. The look-out declares he sees a light off yonder, but *I* can't see it. I was just going forward to look from the bows—but your eyes are younger than mine. Let us go and see."

He walked hastily away, expecting me to follow, but, knowing all that I did, it may well be believed that I had no intention of doing so.

He stopped and hailed me to come on.

"It is not necessary," I answered in as indifferent a manner as I could answer—"*I can see the light from here!*"

"You're dreaming, Herne," he cried.—"Come along."

"Thank you, but moving about makes my head worse, and I can see the light just as well from here, right off the starboard bow it is."

Listening intently I heard a smothered curse.

"Come forward, sir, I order you!" he shouted.

I made no reply; all my faculties were absorbed in endavoring to discover any movement that might take place among the men, who, I had every reason to believe, were by this time collected on the forecastle.

But it was in vain that I sought to pierce the deep gloom around me, while the sighing of the wind amidst the rigging rendered it impossible to detect any slight sounds that might be made.

"By ——," shouted the mate, losing all caution in the rage that possessed him, as I thus tacitly defied him, "by ——, the villain smells a rat! Knock him on the head, boys! Down with him! Give his carcass to the sharks!"

As though by magic, eight forms rose close at hand, and as they rushed onwards, led by Briggs, I raised my revolver and fired.

The foremost man uttered a cry of pain, and staggered to the rear.

Again I fired, stamping on the deck as a signal to those below to hasten, but simultaneously with my shot three others rang bravely out, almost from beneath my feet, and as the mutineers fell back in great confusion at this unexpected attack, the captain and six of the eight passengers sprang on deck, the remaining two having as yet had no time to dress or prepare their weapons.

"Down with them, my hearties," cried the mate, recovering from his momentary confusion. "Down with them! Strike bravely, and then for the *gold!*"

Two of the passengers, like the captain and myself, were armed with revolvers, and we kept up a brisk fire on the mutineers, while the rest wielded handspikes with good effect.

We fought desperately, knowing that should we fail our lives would be the forfeit; but the odds against us were so heavy that I know not what the issue might have been, had not their leader been put *hors de combat* by a blow from a handspike.

This loss, added to those they had already sustained, seemed to daunt our assailants, and catching up the senseless form of the mate, they retreated to the forecastle.

Although during the melee five of the mutineers had been seriously wounded, the damage to our own party was but trifling, a fact easily accounted for by the circumstance of *our* possessing firearms, while not a shot was fired by our opponents.

Hence, strange as it appeared to us that such should be the case, we naturally concluded that they were destitute of these important weapons.

Our conclusion was a mistaken one, however, the real fact being that in the hurry and confusion consequent upon the mate's sudden and unexpected attack upon me, the mutineers had neglected to provide themselves with the firearms they had concealed below so carefully that they could not be obtained at a moment's notice.

Alas! had we but known the truth!

"If we can only prevent them from coming to close quarters," said the captain, as we held an anxious consultation on the quarter-deck, "where their numbers might overpower us, we can probably keep them at bay until we meet another vessel."

We heartily coincided in this opinion, but how was it to be done?

Barricade the deck!

"Yes, that might be done, and we lost no time in setting about it.

The cover of night, (for, as I have already intimated, it was intensely dark) would conceal our movements from the mutineers; but it was necessary to be speedy, for dawn was not far distant.

The engineers were still at their post in the engine-room below, where they were suffered to remain unmolested, the crew knowing well that upon their knowledge depended the safety of the steamer.

"Now, my lads," said the captain, "to work with you. These quarter boats will make a safe barricade. Mr. Herne, as you are the only seaman left us, spring into the starboard cutter, and throw us the lanyard."

Very soon the boat was swung in-board, and landed safely on the deck.

"That will do finely, my boys," exclaimed Captain Clay, as we noted how completely it defended the starboard-quarter-deck. "No need to stuff it, they've no bullets to send through the planks. Now for the other cutter."

By the time the latter touched the deck, the first faint rays of day began to reveal the objects about us; still, as our preparations were now too nearly completed to be thwarted by our enemies, we made no attempt to conceal our movements, being fully satisfied that we had nothing to fear so long as they were kept at a distance; alas! for our terrible mistake.

As we slewed the cutter round to her proper position, a flash and report startled us, while instantaneously our gallant captain leaped high in the air, and then fell headlong on the deck.

The bullet had penetrated as brave and true a heart as ever beat in human bosom. As we lifted him tenderly, a loud laugh arose from forward, while a sharp fire was opened on us.

The command had now devolved upon me—and my first order was to bring up the matrasses from below, and stuff them into the boats.

But speedily as our work was accomplished, the fatal bullet travelled yet more speedily, and another of our little band met his cruel fate.

He was at my side when he fell, and as I raised his head upon my knee, the blood gushed forth from his mouth, the bullet had passed through his lungs, and life was fast ebbing away.

Poor fellow! he was fully conscious that his knell had sounded! He was the youngest of our party, as fine a specimen of youthful, joyous manhood as one would wish to see.

Only the very day before, he had told me of his dear home in England, and how his widowed mother, and one other, dearer even than she, awaited his return to them, with hearts full of joy.

And this was the end of it all!

"Man proposes, God disposes,"—never before had this great fact been so forcibly impressed upon me, as at that moment, when I looked down on those pallid features, upon which death had already placed his signet.

"Mr. Herne," he gasped, "tell them at home;—tell mother, Mary,—I—loved them. —Their address is—in—my stateroom. Cut —my hair—mother,—Mary!—"

A strong shudder passed over his frame; it was the soul, struggling to free itself from the last links of the chain that bound it to its prison-house.

Day had now dawned fully upon us, but the sky was draped in heavy clouds, a fit canopy, I thought, for that dark, sad scene.

Reverently we placed a sail over the two bodies, and then, turning our gaze forward, we saw, to our surprise, that the mutineers had unconsciously followed our example.

A barricade, composed of hammocks and empty casks, had been thrown across the forecastle, interstices being left here and there between them, for a purpose which I easily divined, even had not my first glance revealed the protruding barrel of a musket, behind which appeared the villainous countenance of the mate, evidently on the watch for the first one of our party, who should rashly expose himself.

An instant's reflection, decided my course. There before me, was the ringleader,—the instigator of the mutiny, which had already cost two valuable lives,—even now the villain was eagerly watching for an opportunity to add another to the sad list, and while he lived, I felt that to hope for mercy, or compromise with the mutineers, would be vain.

I had always been accounted a good shot, and with teeth tightly clenched, I raised my revolver, taking deliberate aim at the glaring eyes that flashed from behind the row of hammocks and casks.

Bang! how the sharp report broke the stillness of the early morn!

I did not need to fire again; the mate bounded to his feet, and fell headlong upon the barricade before him, where his body remained, swinging at each movement of the vessel.

Several of the more venturesome of our party now urged upon me the advisability of storming the mutineers' stronghold, confused as they must be by the loss of their leader; but I speedily showed them that such an attempt would be madness.

We resolved to act simply on the defensive, and to await the course of events.

Our patience was not severely tested.

So engrossed had we all been in the scenes enacting around us, that we had not observed the threatening aspect of the heavens.

The wind now began to rise, and in two hours time the full force of the gale was on us.

Hitherto, so calm had been the sea, that it had been merely necessary to lash the helm, but now I cast it loose, calling on three of the passengers to aid me, and our whole united strength was barely sufficient to keep the "Neptune" on her proper course, or to prevent her from broaching to, and wallowing in the trough of the sea.

And now the fault in the steamer's construction became evident.

She pitched terribly *into* the billows, instead of *mounting* them; being too short to extend over two waves, too long to ride easily on one!

The result was to bring all the strain amidships, where she was least able to bear it.

The waves rose higher and higher, and as they occasionally swept over the deck, I directed the passengers to lash the cutters in their places, and to secure themselves also, by means of the ropes.

Scarcely had this precaution been adopted, when an enormous green sea came rushing on behind us, with terrific force, foaming, roaring, tumbling, a fearful object to look at!

"Hold on, hold on for your lives!" I shouted.

And then, with a shock that made the steamer reel and quiver, the mighty wave came aboard.

I was swept from my grasp on the wheel, and borne on its resistless course.

The next thing I was conscious of, I found myself lying in the waist of the vessel, which, fortunately for me, was some four feet deeper than the quarter-deck. I rose to my feet, staggering against the bulkhead that had saved me.

Looking about me, as I recovered from the shock, I found that four of the passengers were all who remained to share my escape from a watery grave.

That terrible wave had swept the deck of all else, animate and inanimate, barricades, boats, mutineers!

As though satisfied with the havoc it had made, the fury of the storm now seemed spent, and in a few hours more, the sea became comparatively smooth.

But now a new danger threatened us!

The engineers rushed on deck with the startling intelligence that the steamer had sprung a heavy leak, amidships, the engine-room being already flooded!

There was no time to be lost, our boats having all been swept away, we hastily collected from below—spars, planks and casks, forming them into a rude raft, which we contrived to push over the side. It had not far to fall, for the steamer was rapidly settling.

At this moment I bethought me that we were destitute of food, so I rushed below, and half swam, half-waded to the steward's pantry, and grasped all I could lay my hands on.

A groaning, gurgling noise named me to hasten my return on deck, and in a moment more we pushed off from the sinking vessel, and none too soon, for scarcely had we attained a safe distance, when the huge mass plunged downwards to her grave.

My story is almost told. For five days we moved slowly over the sea, whither we knew not; but a kind Providence directed our course, and at the expiration of that period, just as our scanty provisions failed, we were picked up by a vessel bound for Plymouth.

☞ Art is not man's antagonism to nature, it is his co-operation with her, his imitation of her, the union of his free force with hers to produce that which neither man nor nature could produce but for each other.

[We have been requested to republish this charming Story by Miss Hattie Boyer, which first appeared in the Saturday Evening Post for September 5th, 1863. To many of our later subscribers it will be entirely new, and those who have before seen it will doubtless enjoy giving it a second reading.]

OPALS.

CHAPTER I.

Sitting by the west window I slipped the ring from my finger and held it up to the waning light. A minute before the Opals had been mere dull concretions, lustreless, and opaque, now how they glowed and scintillated, purple, rose and amber flashing against seas of distant flame as if the hues of a thousand sunsets had been caught and imprisoned in each frail stone.

Richard Adreon must have had a dim perception of their similitude to himself when he gave them to me; opals are splendidly fickle. I half shuddered at the time—not for that, but remembering the ancient superstition how they bring pain and sorrow to the wearer. Was it this ailed me? I smiled at the idea, and replacing the ring on my finger, fell to thinking.

Spring always impresses me with a vague sense of unrest and weariness. In the early months, after the last snow has fallen, and before the buds begin to burst and the trees to blossom, when perchance there comes a day whose soft breath bespeaks it herald of the far-off summer, it seems to me as if the flower-roots and bulbs must turn uneasily in the moist, dark earth, half swooning for light and air, and with faint passionate longings that reach up to the outer world. So we, impelled to nower aspirations by the life-giving forces at work about us, grope blindly for that higher light into whose broad effulgence our souls shall blossom only when the sods are heaped over our grave.

This season the feeling had deepened into positive pain. A nameless fear was haunting me; a fear whose shadow dimmed the sunshine, checked the bounding pulses of youth, and pervaded all sweet sights and odors of the awakening year with intensest melancholy.

A tall form came up the garden walk. I stepped through the low window and stood upon the veranda, the blood for one instant flowing in swifter currents to my heart. It was not the one I expected, certainly not the one I would rather have seen, still I liked Philip St. John. At one time we had been something more than mere friends. Not that I had ever looked upon him in the light of a lover, or that he had stirred any depths of passion in my heart. There are some friendships that without being at all like love, fall just short of it—call it Platonic affection, anything you will, so long as you acknowledge the existence of the fact—and such was this. After I met Philip's friend—Richard Adreon—there was a change in his manner toward me; no special word or act that in looking back memory could catch upon; but an impalpable coolness had grown up between us, a coolness that was felt rather than understood. Perhaps he was afraid that a continuation of the old relations would affect Richard unpleasantly. Perhaps—but it is no matter what I afterwards thought. So it was that we had not met before for a long time. His greeting had something of the old cordiality in it that set me at my ease. I brought him a match with which to light the gas, and as the flame flared in my face, he gazed at me with those eyes of his—eyes that had a peculiar introverted look which baffled scrutiny—and remarked:

"You are looking pale."

"Am I?" I answered.

This somewhat laconic greeting brought silence in its train. Vexed at his steady gaze I turned half aside. I knew that he was reading my heart page by page, leaf by leaf, but though the knowledge gave me a slight annoyance the feeling went no further. Philip St. John was not the man to reveal either your secrets or his own; his was one of those manly, magnanimous natures you feel instinctively you can rely on, so I let him read on without fear—and because I could not help it.

He saw that I was annoyed, and turning away stooped over a vase of flowers upon the table. He trifled with them for a moment, inhaled their fragrance, and picking up a volume of Burns which lay beside them, said—

"I perceive you have not forgotten your old penchant for flowers and poetry."

"No, nor ever will. Sometimes I think they are the only beautiful things in the world, the only things really worth possessing, and yet even they are so unsatisfactory. Look at these violets; I have hung over them until decay sits on their petals, yet every time their breath assails me I am devoured with an insatiable thirst, longing how vainly to reach their odorous secret. As for poetry, it makes me mad—but you are not listening to a word I say"—he was marking in the volume he held in his hand.

"Yes I am," he said, putting the book away, "you were just observing that poetry rendered you a fit subject for the insane asylum."

"Well it does, almost," I resumed, "such thoughts go surging through my brain, and yet I vainly strive to utter them. That is one reason why I am so passionately fond of music, it throbs out and interprets the language of my soul."

"Divine interpreter of a divine language."

Then we rambled off into a talk about painting, and statuary, and all manner of delightful things; and presently Philip passing over to the piano, said,

"You are so fond of music, let us have some."

And he commenced singing a tender, dreamy German ballad—Ich bin Dieu—full of infinite pathos and melancholy. He had an excellent tenor voice, and sang with ease and effectively. I sat entranced.

Suddenly something seemed to sadden him, he struck a false chord, rose abruptly, and took his hat and gloves to go. The beauty of the night tempted me to the gate with him; there he said,

"Shall you be at Miss Livingston's on Friday evening?"

"I expect to, if nothing happens."

"Let me come for you, it will seem like old times"—his voice had a regretful tremor. I mused a moment.

"Richard and Madeline are not good friends, besides," and I sighed bitterly, "he has been so very busy lately, he will hardly have time to go"—this to myself, then I added aloud,

"Yes, you may come."

"Good-by."

I held out my hand, he took it an instant, then flung it from him almost fiercely.

"Why, Philip," I began, "what is the matter?"

"Nothing; forgive me," he said, hoarsely, then added, in a light tone—"Your opals burn me, that's all. Good-night;" and he strode rapidly down the street.

It was early yet, so I returned to the parlor, and drawn thither by the odor of the violets, took the volume of Burns from the table and commenced looking over it. Rather abstractedly, it must be confessed, for my thoughts were running on the strange conduct of my friend, rather than the contents of the book before me. A verse with a faint pencilling beneath it caught my attention. It was the only pencil mark in the book, therefore I noted it.

I don't know whether marked passages affect every one in a similar manner. I never underscore a line unless it vibrates directly on some intimate chord of my heart. Hence it is that in reading what others have marked, I become possessed of a guilty feeling, as of a confidence forced upon me without the knowledge of the owner; accidentally it is true, but one which I have no business to meddle with.

The verse was—

"Although thou maun never be mine,
Although even hope is denied,
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in the world beside."

I closed the book abruptly. If Philip St. John had a secret, it was not for me to fathom it.

The next evening at tea John handed me a letter, saying—

"It has the St. Inagoes post-mark; from Hugh, I think."

Hugh was my eldest brother and a lawyer. He lived near a little, aristocratic, out-of-the way town in the lower part of Maryland; on the old homestead which had been in the Randolph family from time immemorial.

The place was my childhood's home, but after my parents died I grew tired of its quietness. So, although Hugh was my favorite—he was stately and kind, and understood me better than John did—I chose to live with the latter amid the excitement of the great city.

Just now a change of any kind seemed desirable and it came.

The letter was from Hugh, and contained an urgent invitation for me to make my home with him for a time at least.

"Lucy," he said, "was very lonely, and he was obliged to be away on business most of the week. They would try and make it as pleasant as possible for me, wouldn't I come?"

I passed the letter to John, and sat absently gazing through thronging miles on the dear faces at Wood Lawn, until roused by the question,

"Shall you go, or will it be too quiet for you there?"

"I think I must," I answered. "Lucy would be hurt if I refused, besides, it's the old story of La Fontaine's rat, I'm tired of the world, and want to get back to my cheese." John laughed.

The next moment his wife and I were deep in a discussion concerning the relative merits of various articles of Spring and Summer wear, Fan producing her tablets, lest any item should be forgotten, and lamenting all the while that I had such a short time in which to prepare. This was Wednesday night, and Hugh was to meet me in Baltimore on the following Monday.

John looked on helplessly and said—

"Why all she needs is a couple of calico dresses and a few books."

This assertion brought such a storm of laughter and good-natured sarcasm about his ears, that he was glad to entrench himself behind his whiskers and the evening paper.

My feelings that night were of rather a mixed description, that soon resolved themselves into two queries—what will Richard say?—how will Richard feel?

The next morning early Fan and I started out upon a shopping expedition. After that I had some calls to make and she left me.

The last one was on Madeline Livingston. She expressed neither surprise nor sorrow at the news of my intended departure, merely laughed one of her little sarcastic laughs, and said—

"Why, child, you'll die of ennui in that wilderness."

I walked home in the sweet May twilight, crying silently all the way, and feeling inexpressibly lonely and sorrowful; would no one miss me?

It was late on Friday evening when we arrived at Miss Livingston's, and the dressing-room was empty. Of course I stood before the glass a moment, not that it was really necessary, but then it is a pleasure to know that one is not looking absolutely frightful. My dress was of floating, misty purple, with violets in my hair and pansies on my bosom. Purple suits my complexion, and my hair was arranged to my taste, so I felt comfortable.

Drawing on my gloves I passed to the door, where Philip was waiting for me; standing in the shadow, with his face turned from me, and evidently lost in deep thought. I tapped him on the shoulder with my fan.

"You don't look as though you were any more inclined to scenes of gayety to-night than my tired self, but as the claims of society are not to be disregarded, we may as well descend at once."

It was not Philip's voice that answered, nor his face that, bending over mine, kissed me quietly. I drew myself up haughty and irate.

"Oh! it is you, Mr. Adreon; pardon me, I thought it was St. John; where is he?"

He took no notice of my altered manner, and answered.

"I told him I would wait for you, oh! don't go down yet"—I was passing to the head of the stairs—"I want to talk to you."

Who does not know the magic power of a beloved voice? I paused mechanically, and allowed him to lead me to a rustic sofa in the hall.

"What is this about your going away?"—he had heard it, then,—"Is it true?"

"Yes."

"How long shall you be gone?"

"I don't know," I answered, drearily.—"Six months, a year—perhaps I'll die there," for just at that moment I felt as if the latter event would make no material difference to any one, least of all to the listless figure beside me.

"Oh, Ethel!" there were "tears in his voice."

After that no language was spoken save the mute one of eye and lip, yet a forgiveness was asked, a forgiveness granted, the coldness and estrangement of the past week forgotten, the doubts dead.

Philip met us in the lower hall, and we entered the room together just as the band was striking up the Lancers. Madeline had time to whisper a scolding behind her fan for coming so late, then she eyed me with an acute glance and said:

"What ails you? the other day you were a drooping snow-drop; now something has transformed you into a hearts-ease." I smiled back an answer, a smile of measureless content. She understood it. The next moment we had taken our places for the dance.

No one knew that Richard held my promise to be his wife save Philip and Miss Livingston; and as it was not expedient that the engagement should be published just yet, he seldom devoted himself in company to me in particular.

This night was no exception to the rule, but wherever I went his tender eyes followed me, and their glance struck mine with a look of appealing that went straight to my heart.

Once, as tired and heated with the exertion of dancing, I stood in the embrasure of a window, concealed from view by folds of drapery, he came beside me exclaiming passionately,

"Oh! my darling, don't leave me, I cannot bear the thoughts of parting." And I—my heart throbbed with a wild excess of joy, I said,

"He is mine, he is mine, what though a few days will find us hundreds of miles apart. Life is long, and love eternal, and the depth and fervor of our passion will annihilate time and space."

Thus I argued. Ah, well! whatever may have happened afterwards, I know then my darling loved me entirely, even as I loved him.

Philip was my escort to the supper-room. Richard went with Madeline. The latter fact filled me with unbounded astonishment. I have intimated before that the two were not good friends. They were not. As a usual thing they seemed to take all imaginable pains to avoid each other; and when meeting casually there was a vein of sarcasm underlying the quietest commonplaces that passed between them. In short they were opposing forces that no effort of mine could reconcile.

This night an armistice had evidently been agreed upon. Their manner, though still but one remove from the indifferent, was an improvement on the old style, and I was satisfied in time they would be good friends.

Richard came to me to drink wine with him, but as it is one of my oddities never to partake of that beverage in company I refused, and he went back with rueful visage; a moment afterwards he and Madeline were clinking glasses.

A youth beside me who had been favoring my ears with criticisms gratis on most of those present, remarked to his neighbor,

"Mr. Adreon appears very devoted to his belle yonder; I wonder when *the* event will take place?"

I cast an amused glance at my companion. He answered with a queer smile, rather wintry I thought; somehow it unaccountably saddened me.

On Sabbath afternoon I had many calls, friends coming to bid me good-by. Among the last were Philip and Madeline.

Miss Livingston was very gay, but at the door when she bent over me for a kiss, I saw that her face was wet with sudden tears.

Philip went last, but not till twilight fell upon the earth. We three—Richard had been with me all day—were standing in one of the garden walks when he said,

"Ethel, give me something to remember you by—one of those flowers."

I stooped to a tuft growing just at my feet, and plucking a handful gave them to him.

"There is pansies, that's for thoughts!"

He took them, wrung my hand until I could have screamed for pain, and was gone.

I was glad of it. It was fitting that Richard and I should spend these last hours by our two selves.

We sat through the long May evening with clasped hands silently; looking at each other, and talking at rare intervals as those do who will not meet for years—for in love's vocabulary Time is ignored. A day may seem like an eternity, and ages are embodied within the limits of an hour.

The last adieu was spoken, Richard had pointed to the opals and said,

"My darling, when you look at those remember that I love you, and that you are mine; mine only, 'until death do us part;'" and I repeated the words after him softly.

"'Until death do us part.'"

One long kiss of passionate love and sorrow, and I was alone.

CHAPTER II.

The house where Hugh lived was situated half a mile away from the public road. A low, wide, old-fashioned affair, gambrel-roofed and dormer-windowed. Back of it the lawn sloped down to a river, whose waters emptied far out into the bay. There it was my delight to sit through dreamy sunsets, watching the curving ripples play upon the beach, while the floods became infiltrated with purple splendor until the sky beheld its twin; and the current floated seaward; and my soul went drifting on a flood of vague imaginings out to the great Unknown.

The summer passed quietly enough. We had no near neighbors; and as the belles of St. Inagoes were of the wishy-washy order, with very much beauty and very little brains, they were not to my taste nor I to theirs, so we seldom troubled each other. But there were quiet sails upon the river, and long rambles on the uplands, Lucy and I returning ladened with scarlet drops of Love Lies Bleeding, or royal blossoms of cream-tinted Magnolias, and the green wealth of trailing vines. And there were delicious talks on the moon-lighted porch, or a little later when the evenings grew chilly, within the old wainscotted library.

Altogether the days passed quite happily. But sometimes I was very lonely, with that passionate hungering for present affection which is so hard to bear; and then I would look down at my opals and remember that my darling loved me, and so be comforted. Those opals! they seemed a part of Richard's self, and every evening my last act—a very foolish one, no doubt—was to kiss the ring and whisper softly, "Good-night, beloved," it seemed to bring him nearer.

I don't know what I should have done without mail-days. Mail-days, when the sun seemed to shine brighter than at other times, or if it was raining, the drops fell with a cheery drip that was quite refreshing. Even when nothing was actually expected there was always the delicious possibility of a letter; and though when none came the glory fell away from the day, and the happiness from my life, there were others to look forward to,—and so time passed on.

Richard's letters were neither infrequent nor untender, and once he came to me—he was just starting in life and could not leave his business oftener. It was Christmas day, but you would never have known it by any outward token, save that "the morning's lash revealed a frozen tear." The sun shone warmly; and the wheat fields glowed in emerald patches with a promise of the summer. Even the blackbirds perched themselves on leafless boughs, and sang in utter abandon, as if they thought the spring was nigh.

But the evening was chilly, so a lumbrous Yule log glowered in the great wide fireplace in the library, and Richard and I had sipped our egg-nog, and were sitting before it. The sassafras wood burned with a spicy odor, casting its sparkles over floor and ceiling; discovering the quaint, angular faces on the back and arms of the antique, tapestry-worked chair where Richard sat, and throwing a crimson, life-like glow on the marble statue of Hope in the corner.

"Richard, do you not feel very happy?"

"Yes, dear." He bent over and kissed me softly.

"I do; and yet I think the feeling must differ from other people's, because it is wanting in one element; it is not a restful happiness or perhaps it is superior to that of others, and 'tis its fullness gives me such a strange, restless feeling. Just now, too, it has an undertone of sadness. We cannot always be together. You will go back to the city, and I shall feel doubly desolate without you."

"But it won't be for long, my darling."

"No, not for very long. Hugh intends to quit lawyering in the spring, he will be home more then, and Lucy won't be so lonely, and I shall go back."

"And in the fall, you know."

I was gathered to his heart, blushing and silent.

We sat for a long time after that without speaking, then Richard said,

"Dear, may I smoke?"

"Oh! yes." And he produced one of those horrid little brier-wood pipes that are the abomination of modern times. "If you must smoke, why don't you use a cigar?"

"Too expensive, my dear," was the sententious reply, as he fumbled in his vest-pocket for matches. Something fell therefrom and clinked upon the marble hearth. We bent forward simultaneously to catch it, but the prize was mine. I fancied Richard's face looked flushed in the fire-light, possibly it was the exertion of stooping.

"Wherever did you get this?"

It was a tiny gold cross I held in my hand, curiously chased and enwrought, and with the mystic symbol I. H. S. enamelled in old German text upon its centre piece. Where *had* I seen it? Oh! on Madeline's chatelaine.

"Why, Richard, how did you come by this? it is Miss Livingston's."

"Yes, I know," and he puffed nonchalantly, "she lent it to me, as a sort of amulet, I imagine. She said you had witches in this region."

I laughed. My prophecies were at last realized. Madeline and he were good friends.

It was May before I went back, and I had been at Wood Lawn a year—just a year and a day. I went round for the last time to bid my flowers good-by, my flowers that I had watched so tenderly. The hyacinths hung in purple bells, and the crimson flushed in the rose's heart; the swallows twittered in the sunlight, and all the earth was glad with beauty. It seemed a pity to leave just now—but what to me were light and song and bloom, compared with the joy that lay before me? Lucy said,

"If ever you get unhappy, or tired of the world, you must come back to us—you know we shall always be glad to see you," and Hugh sealed the invitation with a kiss.

I am afraid I laughed very incredulously; I unhappy! when would that be?

Lucy saw it and said—

"Don't be too sanguine, dear; remember the words of the song, 'Hope's brightest wreath is wove of earthly flowers.'"

"Yes, but mine is amaranthine," and I sprang into the carriage, and was whirled away.

My first meeting with Richard on my return was not a satisfactory one. He was very quiet, very cold, I thought; and I, taking my cue from him, became indifferent too. Everything was changed from what I expected; I had looked forward to being with him for so long, and now he was so formal, seeming scarcely glad to see me. After he had gone, I sat down and cried miserably for a half hour.

The next time I saw him his old caressing manner had returned. "Some business matters had troubled him," he said; "wouldn't I forgive him for being so abstracted?" Of course I would; and I chided myself for my thoughtlessness in blaming him—I, who would have died for him.

But the moodiness returned, alternating with phases of passionate feeling, when I could not doubt his continued affection, and the distrust of weeks would be banished in a single hour.

Once I told him calmly, I thought we had best separate; but he seemed so hurt that I never afterwards alluded to the subject. So I possessed my soul with patience, and waited for the time when Richard should be himself again.

Madeline, too, was changed, her face had a new expression in it that puzzled me; something between hopefulness and despair. What was it? Everything else was the same, John and Fanny seemed delighted to have me back, and I ought to have been happy, but I wasn't. Not that I had the faintest suspicion of the truth, God knows I had not.

One evening I was at Madeline's, and it was arranged that I should stay with her all night. Richard has been with us in one of his "cross moods" as Madeline called them. After we went up stairs, she stood before the glass combing out the braids of her long wavy hair.

"They say it makes you forgetful to do this before retiring."

"Does it?" I said, "I think I shall have to try the remedy, there are several things I would like to forget."

She gathered up the mass of hair in a knot behind, pushed the comb into it and came and knelt by me; putting her arm around me in a half caressing, half protecting manner, as if to ward off some misfortune or danger. I turned her face partly round in order to get what photographers would call a "three-quarters' view," and eyed her with a keen scrutiny. She reddened uneasily under my glance and said—

"Well, what is it?"

"That's just what I'm trying to find out; you won't tell me your secrets, so I'm bent on an exploring expedition. Your face puts me in mind of the picture of Longfellow's Evangeline, only there is less of hopelessness in it and not so much patience, not so much need of it, perhaps," and I repeated, half musingly—

"All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience."

"Don't, don't," said Madeline, with a quick, imperative gesture, and rising hastily she turned out the gas, leaving us enveloped in total darkness. She was composed enough after that, and we talked ourselves to sleep, or rather I did, for every time I woke in the night I could feel the restless figure tossing at my side. What ailed her?

Not long after this Fan entered the room where I was dressing, and taking up the ring which lay on the bureau beside me, said—

"Do you know these opals feel loose? if I were you I would have the setting tightened before you lose them."

I took the alarm instantly, went to a jeweler's and had them attended to; but after that I imagined I detected a slight flaw upon the amber hardness as if they were cracked. Was it fancy? I believe I was superstitious about those opals, I wouldn't have had anything happen to them for worlds. I got Fan to examine them, her quick eyes could detect nothing.

"Nothing but a little scratch," she said, so I was satisfied.

The Summer had flushed and faded, and September crowned the hills with yellow light. I did not leave the city during all the hot dusty months; you know why; I was busy.

Madeline flashed off to the sea-side, and was now back again. One day I received a note from her.

"My Dear—There will be half a dozen of our set here on Thursday night. You must be sure and come. M. L."

"P. S.—Mr. Adreon will be here, but not till late, so Philip St. John will act the part of your 'cavalier servente.' Addios. M."

I mused over the note a long while. It was foolish, but I felt rather annoyed at the tone of it. "If Richard cannot accompany me," I said, "I should think he might inform me of it himself rather than leave it to Miss Livingston."

On Thursday I had a headache, and felt very little like going anywhere, but I thought it would be a pity to disappoint Philip, so towards night I dragged myself from the lounge and commenced dressing.

I drew my hair plainly off my face, and put on an ash-colored silk gathered at the throat and wrists with ruffles of lace. No ribbon, nor flower, nor pin did I wear, nothing but the opals flashing softly on my hand. After I had finished I flared up the jets of gas on either side of the dressing-table and took a survey of myself.

I was very white, with purple disks under my eyes, but my hair looked well, and my dress was becoming.

"Passable," thought I, "only I look as if I were going to my grave with these cheeks," and I rubbed them violently with my handkerchief.

"There, you have color enough," said Fan behind me; "Philip's down-stairs, so don't keep him waiting."

When we entered Madeline's parlor she came towards us, exclaiming,

"Ashes and sack cloth, Miss Randolph! do you intend taking the veil?"

"I have a notion to that effect," I replied.

"Well, some other time will do, I beg of you don't go through the ceremony to-night. Come here."

She drew me toward a side table, and robbing a vase of half its floral treasures, dropped fuschias in my hair and twined them at my throat, and massed them with tuberoses in my belt, and then giving me a gentle push, said,

"There, you look quite presentable, now go and amuse yourself, or be amused."

I obeyed meekly. Went and sat down in the corner by Mrs. Livingston. She was a very old lady and a very good one. I think if she had one specialty it was a mania for attending funerals. She entertained me with an account of the last she had been to. At another time I should perhaps have shuddered at the mournful recital, but at that moment I was in a mood when glimpses of the unseen land—"Where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest"—were rather pleasant than otherwise, and I listened interestedly.

She was just saying,

"Yes, my dear, about your age, it seemed a sad pity; they do say she died of a broken heart; that—"

Philip's voice at my elbow asked,

"Ethel, won't you lend me your opal ring a moment? Insley and I are having a geological discussion, and I want to illustrate a case in point."

I slipped it from my finger and handed it to him.

He returned presently with a face expressive of the utmost concern—

"I am afraid you will never forgive me for the accident that has happened to your gems, but we were merely examining them when they came to pieces in my hand. See," and he held out the shining amber grains for my inspection.

"It's of no consequence," I said, but my heart gave a great bound, as I placed the frail circlet, denuded of its beauty, on my finger.

"I thought they were getting loose, and went to the jeweler's to have them fixed the other day. I suppose he must have injured them."

"Undoubtedly," said Philip, "I took the utmost care of them."

No more pleasure for me that night; I was impressed with a horrible, undefined anxiety. My opals were gone, what next?

Madeline came to me during the latter part of the evening.

"Ethel, we want to have some dancing; there's not enough of us to make up a set, and you're such a little Puritan you won't polka or waltz or do any of the round dances unless Mr. Adreon is here, and he hasn't come yet, so go and play for us, that's a dear."

I complied, willingly enough; and after playing till the dancers were tired I would have risen, but a voice at my ear—Richard's, he had come in a few moments before—said,

"Don't get up yet, sing something. You know my favorite, 'Had I met thee in thy beauty, when my heart and hand were free.'"

I sang. Philip was standing behind me, Richard and Madeline faced each other on opposite sides of the piano; the rest of the company were playing euchre in the front parlor. After I had finished there was a dead silence for about a minute. I glanced up at the two within my range of vision and said,

"What makes you all so quiet? Any one might think—" I stopped. Something in their faces startled me. They were both very pale. Richard's head was bent slightly forward, and he wore a look half eager, half questioning, wholly determined. Madeline's eyes were lifted to his, as if unwillingly, and with an expression of troubled tenderness, and sorrow, and irresolution in their misty depths.

I turned from one to the other, a new light gradually breaking in upon me. Had I been blind before?

Philip bent over me, saying,

"You are ill, shivering. Come to the fire."

It was September, but the nights were cool, and a few coals burned in the grate.

Faint and dizzy I allowed him to lead me to an arm-chair by it, where he left me in quest of wine. Afterwards I remembered that his tones were low and husky, tender even; and that his eyes gleamed with the fires of an inward excitement.

Richard came over and stood opposite, and we looked at each other. There was no compassion in his gaze, nor any lingering tenderness, only a strange stolid indifference. I knew quite as well then as I did years after, that whatever I had been to Richard Adreon—betrothed wife and sometime idol of his fickle heart—I was no more to him now than the dust beneath his feet. The revelation was a fearful one, but it endued me with a stony calmness, the calmness of despair. Quietly, scornfully, I drew a circlet from my finger, and breaking it into a thousand pieces, flung them into the fire, saying:

"You are free."

He nodded and passed over to Madeline. She put out her hand and he clasped it with a passionate gesture. There was no joy in her face and no triumph, only a deep chastened peace and restfulness. A gulf had been crossed—perhaps it was wrong for her to have bridged it, but she was over now, and there was no returning.

All this I read while they stood there ignoring or forgetting the white, crushed figure by the fire. The voices of the euchre players came to me as from afar off; the faint odorous scent of the tuberoses ascended to my brain, and wrapped me about with a sickening vapor; and through it all I became conscious that Philip was begging me to drink the wine he had brought.

"Oh! Philip, let us go home," I said.

Madeline would have followed us, but I waved her back. Philip waited till I had found my wrappings, and we passed out into the dark, pitiless night together.

CHAPTER III.

Richard Adreon was my idol—and I thought I must have died when he fell from the high place where my love had enthroned him. There is a deeper pain than the knowledge that we are strangers to those who were once ours only. It is to feel that we have built up for ourselves an image of clay, and having glorified it with virtues that existed only in our own imagination, have bowed down and worshipped it—a senseless clod.

There were his old letters to burn, some withered flowers to cast away—pale emblems of a love as dead—and his picture to return; then I put this man out of my heart forever, and accepted the life that came to me. Not submissively, nor patiently—it is not in the nature of youth to be patient, it certainly was not in mine—but because I *must*.

Came October with its bleak nights and sunny noons. Sitting once in my own room in the gloom and darkness of the approaching twilight, a visitor was announced—Miss Livingston.

I bade the servant tell her I would be down presently. There was a battle to be fought first. How should I meet her—cordially as of yore? All the bitter wrong, the fierce pain and mad jealousy confronted me, crying out against it. Then came recollections of our old friendship, the softening thought that she too had loved and suffered—"and is happy," whispered a demon in my heart, but I struck it dumb, and descended.

The room was dark when I entered, and I could not see her face, but she came towards me with out-lifted hands, only saying—

"Oh! Ethel, forgive me. Let us be friends."

Motioning her to a seat, I knelt beside her, striving to be calm, while she clasped me closely, silently. We sat thus until the shadows deepened into night; then unwinding her arms and rising to go,

"Kiss me just once," she said.

I kissed her quietly, with all the bitterness gone from my heart, and in its place only the old trust and tenderness.

"Madeline, I love you," I said, "we *will* be friends."

I went with John to the Opera one night—Fan had a prior engagement—we were early, and he strolled out into the lobby for a few moments before the curtain arose.

A gentleman from the other side of the aisle came and stood beside me.

"Whom have we with us?" said Philip—for it was he.

"Our brother," I replied laconically.

"Then, with your permission," he said, seating himself, "I suppose I can sit here awhile without incurring the risk of being called out a day hence. Besides," he continued, in a confidential tone, half comic, half serious, "I've something pretty to show you, something I want you to keep. Will you?"

"Cela depends. Let me see it."

He put into my hand a small tortoise shell case, filagree-worked, and silver mounted. I opened it curiously, not dreaming of its contents, and there, flashing full in my face from the purple cushion on which they rested, lay opals, scintillant, fickle, and fair to behold. I caught my breath as if a viper had stung me, and handing them back, said, playfully,

"Why, Philip, have you forgotten your legendary lore? Opals are ominous, and I'll none of them."

He took the case, silently, understanding all that my words implied, and an embarrassed pause ensued, during which I swept the house slowly with my lorgnette.

A slight stir in one of the private boxes attracted my attention. The crimson curtains parted, and a lady and gentleman came forward and seated themselves.

The lady was Miss Livingston, radiant with youth and beauty, and with her—Richard Adreon. His presence smote me with a keen pain—the pain that all of us must feel when the unburied dead of our hearts flit past us in the crowded street, and eye us with cold scorn in public places, stinging us with the familiar brightness of a far-off joy, that can never again be ours. Madeline glanced towards me, but I dropped my glass and turned away. I loved her, I had forgiven her, but it was impossible for me to have recognized her then.

A woman who is forsaken by the one in whom she trusted, and is left without faith in God or man, can do either of three things. She can give up the ghost in a quiet, heart-broken way; and after her death be extolled by tender-souled old ladies and sentimental young ones as a person of exquisite sensibilities, who could not endure the harshness and cruelty of this cold world. Or she can glide through life pale and silent, be appointed directress of a sewing circle, and secretary of a female mission; eventually marrying a minister with six children, a large library, and small means. Or she can become one of Society's most devoted votaries, and be scouted by all as a vain, heartless coquette.

I chose the latter course; partly because I was too proud to show that I was suffering—only the two that I have mentioned knew of my engagement, so I was spared that mortification—and too indifferent to care what people's opinions were. And partly because I loved excitement, as a drunkard loves wine, or the gambler his cards—it drowned pain.

So I walked and talked, danced and flirted, a little more recklessly than usual, and with no outward sign to indicate the inane heart that throbbed so nervelessly beneath blithe eyes and smiling lips.

Philip was often with me, always thoughtful of my comfort, but neither cold nor kind, attentive nor indifferent.

A year passed away, and the half of another, then I fell ill. Nervous fever, the physician pronounced it, but John, in his wrath, gave it a new name, known as fashionable dissipation, late hours and night air.

I think there comes a time in every one's life when the "smell of fresh earth is sweeter than violets," and the idea of death—not the grim, terrible reality, but death in the abstract, I mean, with it restfulness and peace—is very pleasant. It was to me, and I drifted slowly back to life and health with a vague feeling of annoyance.

It was during my convalescence that Philip St. John appeared in a new light. He ransacked hot-houses for the choicest flowers and most delicious fruits; read to me when my eyes ached, and sang when I was weary; and just as I began thoroughly to enjoy his society, and, in a manner, depend upon him for comfort and happiness, it was decided that I should be sent to the country to recuperate. So I went back to the old house by the river, feeling very much as if I had lost something out of my life, I hardly knew what.

Philip wrote to me; coldly at first, but gradually a tenderness crept into his letters, and I grew to understand that he loved me, and was waiting patiently for the time when I should return it. My heart responded. I knew that I loved him fervently, with no girlish passion, and that the sorrow of bygone years would haunt me no more forever.

Then he came to me. It was near the sunset of a June day. Swallows twittered under mossy eaves, and the linden trees cast long, cool shadows on the waving grass.

I stood upon the porch, hearing in the far distance the click of hoofs, as a horseman galloped swiftly up the long avenue leading to the house.

Springing from the saddle, Philip drew me into the parlor, and clasped me to his heart as if he would hold me there forever. Kissing me, he said—

"My darling, my darling, I have waited so long."

A week ago we sat in the old library, his arm was around me, and my head rested where it had a right to rest—for we are one now, Philip and I.

"I don't think you've seen my treasures yet; have you, dear?"

"Your treasures?" I answered, laughing; "no, I didn't suppose you had any but me."

"Ah! but I have; look."

He took from his pocket a small ivory box. In it was a handful of withered heart's-ease, with the date, May 17th, 18—, and beside them the shining grains of broken opals.

I looked at them speechlessly, it seemed so good to think he loved me even then.

"Yes, darling, even then," was his answer to my unspoken thought.

"And I've something else here that I offered you once before, and you refused. I'm afraid to ask you again."

"Try me," I said.

He gave me a small tortoise-shell case that I recognized, and in it was a ring that I remembered.

Beside the golden circlet that had rested there for many a week, I placed the glittering opals. Ominous no longer, nor fraught with memories of a living anguish. For beside me rested the true heart that was to be mine through life—brave and tender, faithful to the last.

☞ "Auntie," said a little three-year-old, one day, "I don't like mine aprons tarched so dreadful. So much tarchness makes the tiffness tratch my bareness."

☞ London has just had an exhibition of bar-maids. The most attractive one was to receive a prize, which was decided by the visitors, each of whom deposited a ballot in the shape of paying for cigars or liquor. The maid who sold the most got the prize.

☞ A boy in Iowa has a silver quarter stuck in his throat, where it has been for the past three months. He has tried every way to get it out, but he can't do it, and the only hope is that a circus will go that way soon.

☞ When we read the interminable sentences of some writers, we cannot help thinking that their readers are in danger of being sentenced to death.

The Chemist's Story.

I am a chemist. Many, doubtless, would find it difficult to define what the duties of a chemist are, if asked. To such I say, a chemist is a collector of facts. It is the business of his life to aid in unmasking, for the world's benefit, the good and evil hovering even in the air we breathe, burrowing in the earth we tread, mingling with the food we eat, and swimming in what we drink.

Then again, the law waits on the chemist. A human being has passed suddenly away. Somebody thinks there has been foul play. The chemist examines the body of the supposed victim. The law listens, hat in hand to science. The suspected party trembles in anticipation. The oracular lips of the chemist move; he names one out of the fearful list of poisons. It is either strychnia, prussic acid, or that deadly oil of bitter almonds. The law then puts on its hat, takes the decision into court, and hangs the prisoner.

In short, the chemist must know the whys and wherefores of everything in the phenomena of life as far as feeble man can know. The composition of the ocean he must be familiar with; he must be able to name the gases of the air, and capable of resolving vapors. I am the occupant of this responsible and important position in the Medical College of P——.

It was about eleven o'clock on a stormy evening that I bade good night to my student, Tom Richards, at the door of my laboratory, at the south end of the college building.

"Good night, Professor," said Tom; "we are going to have a fall of hydrogen, oxygen, and a trace of saline."

Hydrogen and oxygen—in our nomenclature, H. O.—is water.

"I hope," I said, in answer to Tom's playful words, "that it will not rain before I get home."

"Oh, no, it won't for an hour yet," said Tom.

"Then," I said, with a sigh, noticing that the mercury in my barometer was rapidly falling, a sign of a violent storm, "I shall certainly get wet."

Tom was very anxious to know what would keep me up after twelve o'clock; so I told him I was about to commence analyzing the stomach of Mrs. Johnson, whose husband now lay in P—— jail, just across the road from the college, on suspicion that he was the murderer. Tom said I had worked hard enough to-day, and deserved the night to myself. He spoke the truth. Still, I had delayed examining the woman's stomach so long, and the trial was so near at hand, that I could not in conscience put off the examination further, although I had heard several classes recite at the different public schools in the morning, had delivered a lecture in the college proper that afternoon, and one in the laboratory that evening, besides attending to my several duties as police surgeon during the day.

As Tom was passing out of the college yard, through the gate, his head turned, and bidding me good night, he brushed against a man standing with his back toward the college and his face to the prison. The street lamp showed me that the man was clad in the police uniform.

Re-entering my laboratory I took down a glass jar from a shelf, and sat down before my sink to examine it. The jar which contained Mrs. Johnson's stomach, was covered by a cloth, duly tied with strings, and properly sealed with my official seal in red wax. Breaking through the cloth and seal, I lifted the stomach out with a dissecting hook and laid it on a white platter before me; then became busily engaged in applying those tests to its contents by which we detect the presence of injurious substances.

An hour passed since the departure of young Richards. I had carefully emptied the contents of the stomach into a number of basins and bowls. I had labored hard to discover traces of poison in all this, but had been unsuccessful. Joe Johnson, the suspected man, had been a student of mine a few years before. I thought him a good-hearted, intelligent fellow, and really began to hope that he might prove innocent, when among the macerated food I came upon a small infinitessimal white grain. By careful manipulation and the use of my magnifying glass, I managed to get this upon a piece of smoked glass, and examined it.

I was then certain I had discovered arsenic; but to make assurance doubly sure, I determined to apply a well-known test for that poison. Accordingly I placed in the woman's stomach the usual acids and then turned on the blow pipe flame, and presently upon a white and beautiful porcelain ground there appeared that brilliant metallic mark, worthy of Cain's brow, which is the sign and signet of the Poison Fiend.

"Yes," I exclaimed, as I saw that blazon, "Joe Johnson is the murderer of his wife. With the evidence of that mark to back me, no power can save him from the rope!"

"Do you really think so?" said a calm, squeaking voice behind me.

I turned quickly and discovered a tall, thin policeman, having red, weak and watery eyes, standing at my office door and staring in. His body looked as if it had been rolled out long between hands, like a molasses candy stick. His nose was merely an elongated, fleshy plug, and his forehead was decorated with two red streaks instead of eyebrows. He had no expression at all in his face, and his policeman's hat was so large that it threatened to settle down on his shoulders.

His uniform reassured me, and I addressed him with some impatience.

"My friend, I suppose I am wanted to attend an inquest—or what is your purpose!"

"No, doctor, the man ain't dead yet."

"Anything in the surgical line?"

I was police surgeon, as well as coroner.

"No."

"Well, then, what am I sent for at this time of night?"

"Don't bother, Professor, the man ain't dead yet; but they say he will be before morning."

"Are doctors attending him?"

"Oh, he's in good hands, Professor."

"What's the matter with him?"

"Well," said the official, "some folks say he's got so much knowledge into him that he can't live under it."

"Cerebral disorder, eh?"

"What?" asked the man.

"Brain disorder, I mean; something wrong here."

"Aye; and I thought I'd drop in and tell you if you was going to the station to-morrow, to take a look and see if it's *post mortem* or not. Besides, I wanted to see where I could find you in case of need."

I bowed and attributed his visit to a feeling of curiosity. He sat on the sink with one rubber boot thrown over the other, and wiped his nose with a dirty handkerchief several times, while his eyes wandered about like Christopher Columbus after discoveries. Finally he spoke like one who thought himself called upon to say something.

"Professor, there has been an accident this afternoon; terrible, too."

"Ah!" said I.

"Awful!" said he.

"What was it?"

"Nitro-glycerine explosion up in the iron mills—a hundred fellow mortals busted!"

"Sad."

"Affecting, very." Here he rubbed his mouth with the back of his hand. "Professor, what is that nitro-glycerine?"

"It is a very dangerous article," I answered, happy to display my knowledge. "It has nearly twice the destructiveness of gunpowder—but, unlike it, does not explode on the application of heat. A red-hot coal dropped into it will not explode it. It will freeze; it is yellow and greasy. Its symbols in our nomenclature are C6, H3, O6."

"You don't mean to say so!" said the officer, interrupting me in disagreeable tones in the very middle of a choice extract from one of my lectures. "Why, but you hain't told me how it does go off. If fire won't bust it, what in—(hem) will?"

I told him that if it were pressed or anything fell on it, it would explode.

"Place it under the crusher of a cider mill, strike it with a hammer, let a weight fall on it from a height—"

"Yes," said my man, "and that rouses its volcano, does it? How does it come, Professor?"

"In little cans—why, like these," said I discovering that there was a little can of it on the marble sink, which I had carelessly neglected to replace in the cellar. I then took a little of the glycerine and spread it on a thin piece of paper, and laying the paper on an anvil, struck it with a hammer. A slight explosion and a flame burst from the paper.

"Now, really," said the policeman, starting back; "I suppose, Professor that that there can would make a mighty noise if allowed to explode in here all at once."

"It would blow the entire building to atoms," said I, resuming the analysis of Mrs. Johnson's stomach.

"No?" I heard the policeman remark, in deliberate Yankee tones; "You don't say so?"

The next moment I lay on my back, a gag in my mouth, terribly frightened and sick at heart. Over me stood the policeman, and the first thing that functionary did was—looking me straight in the face—to take off his nose! He then rid himself of his red eyebrows, hair, cap, and became a determined-looking fellow, with the eyes of a fiend and the nose of a Roman.

"So you think," said the metamorphosed in the tones of a gentleman, "that nothing can save Joe Johnson from the rope? Poor fellow! it does look like it. But, my dear Professor, Joe Johnson is fortunate enough to have in me a devoted friend, as well as a brother. I have undertaken to save him, and he shall be saved! In order to accomplish this end it will be necessary to remove from the face of the earth not only the stomach of his miserable wife yonder, but also, my dear Professor—I'm sorry to be obliged to say it, for I believe you were my brother's teacher and friend—yourself as well."

I saw that he was in deadly earnest.

"Your death must apparently result from accident—at least, so it must seem to the authorities. My brother is in jail, and they will not suspect me."

What terrible deed was his brain hatching? Was he going to murder me? The hoarded knowledge of a score of years I would have given for power to utter but one single cry.

He took me in his arms and placed me in a chair, and bound me to it, and then from a side pocket he produced another rope.

Was it myself who was to hang instead of Joe Johnson?

No; yes. He placed the line pulley-like over an arm of the hanging chandelier. This was too slight a support even for one of my slender frame. It was not to be hanging, then.

To one end of the rope he attached a weight, and raised it, by pulling the other, six or eight feet from the floor. The loose end he secured to the sink. Was he mad? Did he mean to draw me under this weight, and send me out of the world in a novel way by letting it fall, and dashing my brains out?

To the sink end he attached a long yellow string.

Under the weight on the floor he placed the can of nitro-glycerine. I recognized the yellow string; it was a fuse, and would burn sixty minutes. It would burn across the marble slab—there was no hope of igniting any substance that would warn my friends.

"Do you begin to see through it?" said Joe Johnson's brother.

I believe I cursed him with my eyes. I could only breathe through my nostrils; the great veins were swelling and growing hot in my forehead.

Drawing a match from his pocket, he lighted and applied it to the fuse, that little tyrant that gave a man an hour to live, and killed him at the end of it—that little irresponsible terror that, less merciful than Providence, told a man the second he was to die, if fright and horror spared him to itself.

Slowly the flame crept, snake-like, around the twine.

"In an hour," said the poisoner's brother, "you will be in heaven or hell. I will watch with you for half an hour, and the other half you will spend alone."

He sat down some minutes in a chair watching the flame. Then he arose and took the piece of porcelain with the murderer's mark thereon from the table, and shook his head gloomily.

"I am chemist enough to know it is arsenic," he said. "Yes, those bright metallic eyes, a betrayer of the guilty! Science, thou wouldst kill my brother! Thou shalt save him. Let us see in whose hands thou art most powerful. Here is a man who, by thy aid, bids the poison-sprite uprise and write in brilliant characters a foul confession on this piece of porcelain. But behold, O science! It is no sooner written than, by thy aid, the whole confession and thy chosen servant are annihilated. Let the good professor use his chemicals, the bad brother only asks—a little can of nitro-glycerine!"

I heard this speech, indeed; but, great heavens! it was my eyes and not my ears that were busiest then. For, from beneath the table, covered by the crimson cloth of which I have before spoken, and which I faced, appeared the head of a child. The hair was rumpled and the blue eyes were just opening from sleep. The intelligent forehead was wrinkled strangely. It was my boy, Billy. I was afraid he would cry "papa!" If he did, the implacable man would add the murder of the child to the murder of the father.

But my boy did none of this. He had, I suppose, crept under the table unknown to me, and fallen asleep there. I tried to tell the little fellow to hide again, and wait for the final half hour when my tormentor would be gone. Whether he understood me or not, aided by what he had heard, I did not know; but he quickly withdrew his curly head, first kissing his hand to me and then shaking his fist at the schemer watching so deliberately his dumb fire agents.

The half hour wore slowly away. O heavens! what agony did I suffer! Not for myself, but for my child. A slight noise might discover his presence; the match might run its tether sooner than was expected. He might be murdered or blown to atoms.

The fuse burned on—on. The half hour is up!

The brother of the murderer rises to go! Joy!

"Commit your soul to God's keeping," he said. "You who hold the evidence of my brother's guilt—nothing can save you now."

With that he turned to take his hat from off the table covered with the crimson cloth, beneath which hid my priceless boy. Something attracted his attention. He held out his hands and leaned forward. I thought he had discovered my boy. No, he was lifting something in either hand—the wires of the electric battery. In another instant my boy had leaped from under the table, and was turning the crank fast and furiously.

The murderer's brother was in the power of my boy. He could not drop the wires; he was helpless and motionless. How my boy cried for help. The old college rung again. The poisoner's brother added his voice to my boy's in his agony. He begged, he beseeched—all his nerves were racked—great waves of galvanism leaped, and surged, and jarred over every sensitive nerve and fibre. Still my boy was inflexible, shouted and turned faster.

Unperceived upon the marble, in the track of the burning fuse, was a pool of inflammable oil. In an instant a great length burned away. It would last just five minutes and no more.

"Father," shouted my boy, "if no assistance comes, this villain must die with us, I dare not let him free. Help! help!"

"Alas! I could not answer him.

But some one else did, thank God! The fuse is burnt up! The rope is on fire; the weight trembles; another minute it will fall upon the nitro-glycerine. The door opens. Tom Richards, on a midnight visit to the sick, has heard the cry. He comprehends all, seizes the can in his hands—the weight descends indeed, but not on the death-dealing oil. No, down it goes through the office-floor, down, down, like an evil spirit, to give back a dull, metallic echo from the stones of the cellar beneath.

We are saved!

Joe Johnson, the poisoner, was hanged, but his brother remains unpunished by the law, for he stabbed himself with a knife, and thus escaped the hangman's rope.

"Out of a Junk Boat," is being copied very widely by the press, but in very few instances is credit given, either to the writer, "Madge Carroll," or to "The Lady's Friend," in which it originally appeared. Judging from the way in which the leading city and country papers take the stories of "The Lady's Friend," few of our magazines publish such popular stories.

☞ In the course of an editorial on the Scott Centenary, the writer quoted Scott's well known lines:

"Caledonia, stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child."

The compositer set it thus:

"Caledonia, stern and wild,
Wet nurse of a poetic child."

The compositor was buried at the expense of the office.

☞ "You seem to walk more erect than usual, my friend." "Yes, I have been straitened by circumstances."

☞ Switchtenders and brakesmen on American railways are frequently on duty for long periods, and suffer from loss of sleep. Some of them in this state are said to lay down alongside the track to snatch a few moments' slumber and lay their hand on the rail, so that the jar of approaching trains will wake them. If they sleep too soundly their hands are sometimes run over and mashed. The practice is a horrible one, and no railway is justified in overworking its employes in such a way as to require it.

☞ The financial editor of the Bennington Banner reports marriages dull, engagements depressed, courtships good and prime, scandal overstocked, belles plenty, beaux scarce, and of poor quality.

☞ Prof. Tyndall has recently perfected a new respirator for firemen, in which the solid particles of the densest smoke are arrested by films of cotton-wool wetted with glycerine, and the most pungent gas by layers of charcoal. By these simple means, firemen can remain within burning buildings for upwards of half an hour at a time, with safety and comfort, so far as their respiration is concerned.

☞ Small coins are called chicken feed in Wall street.

☞ The best coral is worth fifty times its weight in gold.

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—12,000 bbls at prices ranging from $5@5.50 ₩ bbl for superfine, $6@6.50 for extra, $6.50@7.25 for Pennsylvania extra family, $7@8 for northwest family, $7@7.50 for Indiana and Ohio family, and $8@9 ₩ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour sells at $5.

GRAIN—Prime Wheat—50,000 bus sold at $1.63@1.65 for Pennsylvania red; $1.62@1.67 for western red; $1.60@1.65 for Delaware red; $1.65@1.75 for amber, and $1.70@1.78 ₩ bus for white. Rye—Sales of 4,000 bus western at 90c@$1 ₩ bus. Corn—Sales of 80,000 bus at 83@86c for mixed, and 84@87c ₩ bus for yellow. Oats—Sales of 104,000 bus at 59@61c for mixed, and 61@63½c for white. Barley—4,000 bus sold at 97c@$1 ₩ bus.

PROVISIONS—Sales of Mess Pork at $14,50@14,75 ₩ bbl. City packed extra Mess Beef at 15@15,50 ₩ bbl. Beef Hams command $28@34. Bacon—Sales sugar-cured city smoked Hams at 14@15½c; Excelsior Hams at 14c; sides at 7½@8¾c, and shoulders at 8c. Green Meats—Sales of pickled Hams at 12@13c, and shoulders, in salt, at 10@11½c. Lard—Sales at 9¾@10c for city and Western steam and kettle rendered. Cheese—sales of New York factory at 12@13½c. Butter—Sales of roll at 18@26c, and packed at 12@14c. Eggs—Fresh sell at 27@28c; Western bring 26c ₩ doz.

COTTON—Sales of 700 bales at 20@20½c for Middling Upland, and 20¼@21c for New Orleans.

BARK.—No. 1 Quercitron is quoted at $35 ₩ ton.

BEESWAX sells at 29@32½c ₩ ₩ for Yellow.

FRUIT—Dried Apples sell at 3½@7¼c. Green Apples sell at $3@5 ₩ bbl. Cranberries are held at $9@11 ₩ bbl.

HAY—Prime Timothy Hay, ₩ 100 lbs., $1,80@1,90; mixed $1,25@1,35; Straw $1,30@1,35.

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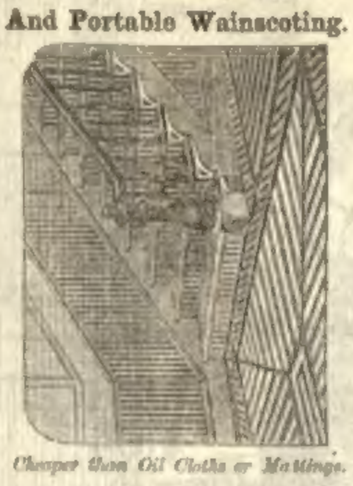

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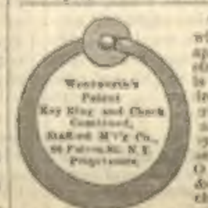

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WIT AND HUMOR.

ARTEMAS WARD ON ART.

I like art. I admire dramatic art, although I failed as an actor. It was in my school-boy-days that I failed as an actor. The play was the "Ruins of Pompeii." I played the Ruins. It was not a very successful performance; but it was better than the "Burning Mountain." He was not good. He was a bad Vesuvius. The remembrance often makes me ask, "Where are the boys of my youth?" I assure you, this is a conundrum. Some are amongst you here, some in America, some are in jail. Hence arises a most touching question: "Where are the girls of my youth?" Some are married; some would like to be. Oh, my Maria! Alas! she married another: they frequently do. I hope she is happy; because I am. Some people are not happy: I have noticed that.

My orchestra is small; but I am sure it is very good, so far as it goes. I give my pianist ten pounds a night and his washing.

I like music. I can't sing. As a singist, I am not a success. I am saddest when I sing: so are those who hear me; they are sadder even than I am. The other night, some silver-voiced young man came under my window, and sang, "Come where my love lies dreaming." I didn't go; I didn't think it would be correct.

TIT FOR TAT.

In a small town on the Schuylkill River there is a church in which the singing had run down. It had been led many years by one of the deacons, whose voice and musical powers had been gradually failing. One evening the clergyman gave out the hymn, which was in an odd measure, rather harder than usual, and the deacon led off. Upon its conclusion the minister said:

"Brother B—— will please repeat the hymn—as I cannot pray after such singing."

The deacon very composedly pitched it in another tune, and the clergyman proceeded with his prayer. Having finished, he took up the book to give the second hymn, when he was interrupted by the deacon gravely getting up, and in a voice audible to the whole congregation, saying:

"Will Brother —— make another prayer? It would be impossible for me to sing after such a prayer as that."

RATHER FAMILIAR.

A certain eminent temperance lecturer was setting forth a most awful portraiture of old King Alcohol, when a muzzy-looking brother arose in a corner of the hall and observed:

"I like t' ask the gen'l'm'n a quesm."

"Certainly, my friend," said the urbane speaker, "by all means."

"I wish t' inquire of the gen'l'm'n 'f he's ever been tight?"

"Thank God, no!" was the fervent response. "This brain has never been muddled with the accursed thing."

Once more the muzzy one spoke.

"Then don't the gen'l'm'n seem to use great f'miliarity 'bout an entire stranger, 's long 's he hain't been introdooced?"

The speaker had to struggle for some moments before he could circumvent the unseemly interruption, and get back to the thread of his discourse.

STICK TO THE FENCE.

For fifteen years daily at Stamford, Connecticut, a man has sat on a fence and watched every railroad train as it passed.—*Exchange.*

He is probably trying to make up his mind if it would be safe to ride in the cars. Old fellow, you stick to that fence! If the top rail is sharp, turn it over or put a cushion on it. Fit up a smoking apartment on the next panel if you like, and rig a luxurious couch on the next one to that. Bring out your baggage, take a check for it, and hang it on a post. Buy a ticket and punch it yourself. Ask yourself the distance to the next station, and get insulted. Secure, as your means will permit, all the luxuries of railroad travel, but don't get off that fence to enjoy them. So shall you die a natural death, and the good wife shall not expend the farm fighting the life-insurance companies over your cold corpse. You're in the right of this thing, old rooster!—*San Francisco News Letter.*

THE TABLES TURNED.

A youth in Iowa, who has a turn for practical joking, recently tried to impose upon an honest lager-beer vender by leading a mule into his saloon, and taking him up to the bar as if for a drink. Mein Herr looked steadily at the pair for a few moments, as if collecting his stray wits, and then broke out as follows:

"See here, Vynce, I know vat dis is here—your own brudder—but he be one you call a minor. He ish too much young to drink his glass lager; it is not for the law in no place, nor not mit my saloon. He look like you; you may be one family, as you call it; but if you ever bring dat yonng brudder here again, I will shust tell you old fadder jackass of you both. Now shust go along mit yourself."

The young man and the mule went along, weeping as they went.

A youth, while travelling in California, was ambitiously displaying a small pistol before a brawny miner, whose belt was weighty with two heavy six-shooters, when the miner asked what he had there. "Why," replied the youth, "that is a pistol." "Wal," said the rough, "if you should shoot me with that, and I should find it out, I'd lick you like fun."

"The "Saratoga Stride."—Of the new "Saratoga stride" the local paper says: "It is really hard to do. You have to practice it a good deal in your room, and then if you don't get your fins—we mean your arms—to bang just right, you spoil it all, and you hear them whisper as you pass along, 'She hasn't got it right.'"

A feet fellow seeing in the street an old woman who drove some asses, said, "Adieu, mother of asses." "Adieu, adieu, my son," answered she. The man felt his ears grow as he walked along.

A private in camp was observed vainly endeavoring to gnaw a piece of uncommonly "hard tack," and was asked if he did not suppose the tough biscuit was rather old. "Guess it is," he replied, "the figures are worn out, but here's "B. C." [Before Christ.]

Suspicious.—A rustic drank his first glass of soda-water very solemnly the other day, and then, eying the waiter inquiringly, anxiously remarked, "It's all right, I s'pose?" "Why, yes," said the waiter, hesitatingly; "but what do you mean?" "Why, the thing won't go off in a fellow, will it?"

Mr. Theophilus Popp, of Poppville, in Popp County, fancying himself to be very popular with his lady love, popped the question to her under the poplar tree, where she referred him to her poppy, who, when asked for his consent, laboring under the influence of ginger pop, popped him out of the door to the tune of "Pop goes the weasel!"

"HAPPY THOUGHT."

Mistress (who had come down to see about the bass voice she had heard in the kitchen—Guardsman discovered!)—"O, you deceitful girl, to say there was nobody here! And after I'd given you distinctly to understand I don't allow 'followers;' and here, you haven't been here a week—"

Cook.—"Lauks, M'm, it must be one o' the follerers as the last cook left be'ind her!"

THE AGUE.

Once upon an evening bleary,
While I sat me dreaming, dreary,
In the sunshine thinking over
Things that passed in days of yore,
While I nodded, nearly sleeping,
Gently came a something creeping,
Creeping upward from the floor,
"'Tis a cooling breeze," I muttered,
"From the regions 'neath the floor:
Only this and nothing more."

Ah! distinctly I remember—
It was in that wet September,
When the earth and every member
Of creation that it bore,
Had for weeks and months been soaking
In the meanest, most provoking,
Foggy rain, that without joking,
We had ever seen before.
So I knew it must be very
Cold and damp beneath the floor—
Very cold beneath the floor.

So I sat me, nearly napping,
In the sunshine, stretching, gaping,
With a feeling quite delighted
With the breezes 'neath the floor,
Till I felt me growing colder,
And the stretching waxing bolder,
And myself now feeling older,
Older than I felt before;
Feeling that my joints were stiffer
Than they were in days of yore,
Stiffer than they'd been before.

All along my back, the creeping
Soon gave place to rustling, leaping,
As if countless frozen demons
Had concluded to explore
All the cavities—the varmints!—
'Twixt me and my nether garments,
Through my boots into the floor;
Then I found myself a shaking,
Gently shaking more and more,
Every moment more and more.

'Twas the ague: and it shook me
Into heavy clothes, and took me
Shaking to the kitchen, every
Place where there was warmth in store;
Shaking till the china rattled,
Shaking till the morals battled;
Shaking, and with all my warming,
Feeling colder than before;
Shaking till it had exhausted
All its powers to shake me more,
Till it could not shake me more.

Then it rested till the morrow,
When it came with all the horror
That it had the face to borrow,
Shaking, shaking as before,
And from that day in September—
Day which I shall long remember—
It has made diurnal visits,
Shaking, shaking, oh! so sore:
Shaking off my boots, and shaking
Me to bed if nothing more,
Fully this if nothing more.

And to-day the swallows flitting
Round my cottage see me sitting
Moodily within the sunshine
Just inside my silent door,
Waiting for the ague, seeming
Like a man forever dreaming;
And the sunlight on me streaming
Casts no shadow on the floor,
For I am too thin and sallow
To make shadows on the floor—
Nary a shadow any more.

The Peddler's Story;

OR,

A Night at the "Black Bear Inn."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY NEWT. H. IVINS.

It was a cold November evening in the year 18—, when a peddling wagon drew up before a tavern in the little town of Auburn, Pennsylvania. The landlord quickly appeared, and cordially bade the stranger welcome; and immediately the hostler came and took the team in charge.

An hour later, after having partaken of a good, substantial supper, the stranger found his way to the bar-room, where were assembled a crowd of guests. Seating himself near the stove, he drew from his pocket a cigar, lighted it, and began deliberately smoking.

"A cool night this, gentlemen," he observed, after drawing a few whiffs at his cigar.

"Yes; 'tis quite cool," replied the host.

A pause of a few minutes ensued, when the landlord spoke—

"You are a peddler, I presume?"

"Yes, sir."

Another pause.

"Might I take the liberty to ask how long you have followed the business?" resumed the host.

"Certainly, sir; I have been a peddler for the last ten years."

"You doubtless have been the participant in a great many adventures, and perhaps dangers."

"You speak truly," replied the peddler.

"Could you not favor us with the recital of one of your adventures?"

"I suppose I might."

"Won't you have something to drink first?" asked the landlord.

"With pleasure," replied the peddler.

After having drank a glass of good brandy, he commenced the following interesting narrative:

"It was five years ago last October, that the adventure I am about to relate, befel me. I was travelling in the western part of Ohio, which was at that time (a great portion of it, at least,) almost a wilderness.

"My stock-in-trade consisted almost entirely of jewelry, and I found ready sale for it wherever I went. I did a good business for some weeks, and my stock began to run low; while the money I had taken in exchange had accumulated into quite a sum, and I began to wish it in a place of safety. I was very careful not to expose it to view, for I well knew that there were some around me who would not hesitate to take my life for one half the sum I carried on my person.

"One cloudy morning I left the village where I had been staying a couple of days, and set out for the next town of importance, distant about twenty miles. I learned that my way lay through a very sparsely settled tract; and that, indeed, the last half of the distance would be through a forest, in which there was but one clearing, in the midst of which stood a small log tavern, bearing the name of the 'Black Bear.' I asked my informant the character of the house, and found as I had supposed that it was none too bad a name for it, as it had the reputation of being kept by one who would not hesitate to commit any crime if by so doing he could put gold into his pocket. I further learned that he had always with him one or two choice spirits, as bad as himself; and several times he and his associates had been arrested, on suspicion of having made way with missing travellers, but no evidence could be adduced against them, and they were set at liberty.

"These particulars I learned the night before I set out, and I determined to take so early a start as to be able to pass the Black Bear by a little past noon time. The large amount of money I had about me made me nervous; and I knew that aside from this, my small trunk and its contents would be a great inducement to put me out of the way, so as to gain possession of it. I am not naturally a timid man, but I must confess that there was scarcely a night that I could rest easy while I was in that part of the country.

"As I have said, the morning was cloudy when I left the tavern where I had been staying, and set out on my long walk. The sky was overcast, but still I did not think it would rain that day. The clouds seemed to be burdened with water; but they had looked that way for two days previous, and I could not see any alteration that would denote a change. But in this, as in many other things in my life, I was mistaken, for before ten o'clock a heavy mist began to fall, which soon turned into small, but visible drops of rain. But I did not mind this, only as it served to increase my speed a little; for, unless it came down harder, half a day would not wet me through to the skin. It must have been nearly noon when I came to a place where the road branched in widely different directions. There was no board to guide me, and I was at a loss which road to take, as one seemed to be travelled as much as the other, and I could not conjecture in which direction lay the village to which I was bound. Not a habitation could be seen on either road, and the last one I had passed was at least two miles back. There was nothing to do but to rush blindly ahead, which I did, trusting to chance to guide me aright.

"Through the lonesome forest I passed, and I had gone at least three miles, when I came upon a clearing, in the midst of which stood a log cabin. At first sight I thought I was approaching the Black Bear, but on a nearer approach I could not see the sign I supposed it to have. But perhaps it had none. I did not wish to call, but must do so, to ascertain if I was on the right road to the place of my destination. I rapped loudly upon the door, and when an old woman made her appearance, I inquired as to my whereabouts.

"I found, to my chagrin, that this was not the Black Bear, and that I was on the wrong road. Very comforting assurance this, I thought, as I turned my back upon the cabin and began retracing my steps through the rainy forest back to where the road branched. Three weary miles it was, and two good hours were lost by the blunder I had made.

"Just as I struck into the other road the rain began to pour down in torrents, and in less than half an hour I was wet to the skin. I looked at my watch, and to my utter dismay I found it to be nearly three o'clock in the afternoon. On I went through the rain and mud, with the lonesome forest on either hand, through which the strong easterly wind was sighing and moaning as if pitying my forlorn condition; and sometimes I could fancy its voice was telling me to turn back, but still I pursued my way onward as best I could.

"Four or five miles were passed in this manner, and for at least two back I had been momentarily expecting to come in sight of the Black Bear; but still nothing ahead but the seemingly interminable forest. And to make matters worse, I found it was growing dark, and I was obliged to confess to myself that it was nightfall; but where the day had gone I was at a loss to determine.

"The most fearful forebodings now took possession of my mind. Here I was, wet to the skin, and a cold November night fast coming on. To stay out of doors was impossible, yet no human habitation was near, except the Black Bear, and that might be miles away—and how could I stop there after the reports I had heard concerning it?

"On I went, however, in the fast increasing darkness. I must confess that the terrors of the Black Bear grew less and less,—and I don't know but I should have welcomed any human habitation, even had I known it to be a den of murderers. It was, therefore, with a feeling of relief, if not of joy, that I saw a light glimmering brightly ahead, through the forest trees, and I knew it must proceed from the tavern. It was not so dark, but that as I passed the corner of the house, I could see on a board that reached from a tree to the tavern, the words 'Black Bear,' in large black letters.

"It was not a bad looking man that bade me welcome as I entered the house. He did not look past forty, and was what the world would call handsome. In spite of all that I had heard, I was at once favorably impressed toward him.

"Before a large fire I dried my garments, and as I listened to the heavy beating of the rain without, thanked my stars that I had found so comfortable an abiding place—safe from the fury of the tempest which was howling so drearily without; and when an hour later I had partaken of a good substantial supper, my comfort was not decreased in the slightest.

"If I had any doubt still existing as to my security from danger, they were dissipated, when he told me that his partner and their only servant had gone to a village some twenty miles away, and would not return for two or three days. There was no more danger to be apprehended, for I felt pretty certain that I was a match for the landlord, should he make an attempt upon my life.

"The evening passed away pleasantly, for my host was a great talker, and I found him to be a very agreeable companion. At length we relapsed into silence; and after listening for some time to the roaring of the storm without, I signified that I would like to retire. With many apologies for his poor accommodations, the landlord led me up a rude ladder to the unfinished loft, over the bar-room, which contained two beds, one of which he signified I might occupy. Wishing me a good night's rest, he went out and closed the door, and I heard him descend the ladder into the bar-room.

"I then made preparations for sleep, such as were my usual custom. My pistol I placed beneath my pillow, my money was in a belt around my waist, where I carried it day and night. I placed my trunk beneath the edge of my bed, near my head, where it could hardly be moved without my knowledge. With these precautions, I threw myself without undressing upon the bed, and was soon asleep.

"How long I slept soundly, I do not know; but at length I awoke feeling a great depression of spirits, accompanied with a dread of something terrible, not unlike a presentiment.

"At first I was inclined to believe it a touch of the dyspepsia, and hoped to find relief; but the symptoms growing worse instead of better, I got up and paced the floor, shuddering at every step, and fancying myself surrounded by demons.

"I approached the bed, and was just in the act of getting in, when I fancied I heard the low hum of voices in the bar-room. Was I mistaken? I listened intently. No, I was not mistaken; I could plainly hear the sound of voices in the room below, and they were the voices of men. A terrible fear darted through my mind. Had the landlord deceived me as to his being alone in the house, as regarded men, or had they returned unexpectedly? And still they might be late travellers, who, like myself, sought shelter from the storm. I would see, for I could not sleep till I knew for a certainty the object of the conversation below. I crawled on my hands and knees to where the light came up through a narrow crack in the rough floor from the bar-room beneath.

"As silent as a phantom I glided along, and at last I reached a position where I could apply my eyes to the crevice. One look, and the blood chilled in my veins, and I could feel the hair rising upon my head.

"Directly beneath me stood three persons. One of them was the landlord, and he held in his hand a dark lantern. Close beside him stood a man, dark and fierce looking, perhaps ten years his senior; in his right hand he held a long knife, the edge of which he was closely examining. The remaining one of the group also grasped a knife, which he was drawing across the palm of his left hand to give it an edge. My God! were those knives intended for my heart? Yes; for the next moment, words from the lips of the landlord confirmed it.

"'Don't be in a hurry—let us make sure that he is asleep; it will save trouble. I always hate to have a great fuss about such things.'

"'Of course he is asleep before this time. But to make matters sure you had better go up and see,' replied the eldest looking one.

"I heard footsteps ascending the ladder, and silently I made my way back to bed, and when I knew that the landlord was listening I coughed lightly, and made a noise as if I were turning over in bed. This had the desired effect; for a moment after I heard him descend the ladder, and in a low tone communicate the fact to his companions that I was awake. In a moment the light faded from the crack in the floor, and all was still in the room below.

"'What was to be done?' was the question I asked myself as I sat there in the dark, the rain beating loudly upon the roof close by my head. 'How was I to escape from the certain death that awaited me from the hands of the assassins below?

"As I sat thus a moment, almost stupefied, a ray of hope dawned upon me. I had noticed as the host showed me my bed, a window in the west end—the only one the apartment contained, but it was so dark now I could see nothing of it. 'There may yet be a chance of escape,' I thought. Softly I crossed the chamber, and by the sense of feeling, I found the window. It was but the work of a few minutes—though every minute seemed an age to me—to remove the sash from its resting place. Ah! never did the air of Heaven seem so sweet as when a dash of rain struck me full in the face. It seemed as though even then I was free from danger. How far it was to the ground was the next question to be considered. I put forth my hand aimlessly, and, to my great joy, it rested upon the roof of a shed which seemed to slope off towards the ground. This was unexpected good luck, and in a few minutes I, with my trunk, was out upon the roof in the pelting storm. I cautiously felt my way down to the eaves, which I found to be within a few feet of the ground, and in less time than it takes to tell it, I was upon the earth.

"It was dark—so dark that I could not see my hand when placed six inches before my eyes. After a few minutes of groping about, however, I found the road, along which I sped as fast as it was possible for a man fleeing for his life to go. It was just as I was leaving the clearing and about to enter the forest that I heard a dull shout behind me, and glancing back I saw a bright light streaming from the window through which I had made my exit. My escape had been thus early discovered.

"A mile or more I dashed along the road, and then sought shelter in the forest. From my dark covert I heard footsteps pass and repass, and doubted not my would-be assassins were in pursuit of me.

"The morning came at last, and cold, wet and stiff I entered the road and sped towards the village, which I reached about ten o'clock. I told my story to the proper authorities, and in company with the officers went back to the Black Bear, which we found silent and deserted. They had probably anticipated our visit and left for parts unknown."

Answers to Correspondents.

To Contributors.—All manuscripts sent to us should have the price marked upon them if any is desired. Writers of no literary reputation should be satisfied at first if a good deed is afforded them to display their talents and gain a name. We do not guarantee the safe return of manuscript, but endeavor to return it safely when desired, and when the requisite stamps are sent. Articles may be good of their kind, and not be suitable for our purposes. Experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their articles prompt attention.

C. M. of Maryland writes: "We have *mislaid* the number of The Post which came the first of this month. Please send us another." We do not agree to replace numbers that are mislaid. Our duty is performed in sending the paper. It is not a very serious expense to a subscriber, that of six cents, for an extra paper, but it is rather unfair to us to have to supply people with their papers over again.

Williamson (Oswego, N. Y.) writes: "Seeing that you give advice in many cases of heart trouble, I venture to approach you with a question, and hope you will be kind enough to favor me with an answer. I love a young girl whom I have known for a year past. She loves me too, and would be willing to marry me, but her friends oppose the match, on the ground that I am poor, and wish her to marry a wealthier man who is paying attention to her. Would you advise me to marry her against her friends' wishes, and in spite of the fact that we are both poor?" If you are able to make a living for yourself and another (with the probable etceteras) you will be as well off as nine-tenths of the world. Her friends' wishes need have nothing to do with the matter. It is your and her wishes which must finally settle it. If there is no other difficulty in the way, we see no especial reason why you should not marry, in case you are both of suitable age, and you are able to support a family in a decent and respectable manner.

J. F. F. (New Orleans) writes: "I lost an arm in the late war. This is made an objection to my marrying a lady with whom I am deeply in love, and who loves me, and is very willing to marry me, crippled as I am. I am making a good living, so that is not in the way. Do you not think that her parents are unkind in objecting to our marriage? We are both of age, would we not be justified in marrying?" It would be best to make a further effort to obtain the parents' consent. If the circumstances are just as you state them, they could probably be made to see the matter in a proper light.

Annie, (Lambertville, N. J.,) writes: "I have been reading your kind counsel to your friends for some time, and now I would fain receive a little, and profit by it. When 'treated' by a gentleman, to an ice, for instance, is it necessary to thank him, if in a large company? 2d. Please tell me if my handwriting is good enough for a book-keeper. 3d. Can you give me the name of a good organ instructor?" Certainly you should thank him. It is best to act on the rule that thanks are due to any one who does, or wishes to do you a favor. The fact of there being a large company should not influence your conduct. The more there are present, the more likely is any lack of politeness on your part to be observed. 2d. Your handwriting is very good, and would do very well for book-keeping. 3d. We do not know whether you wish the name of a work on organ playing, or of a teacher of the organ. There are several good teachers in Philadelphia. One of the best is Mr. Wood, the blind organist of St. Stephen's Church.

Lover, (Nashville, Tenn.,) asks: "What course would you advise me to take to get an introduction to a young lady? I have met her occasionally for a year and have a very high regard for her, but have never had an opportunity to speak to her. I am inclined to think that she looks favorably upon me, but am afraid to speak without an introduction, for fear of offending her. Please favor me with your advice." The best course for you to pursue will be to make yourself acquainted with some of her friends, and thus open the way to an introduction.

Belligerent, (Buffalo, N. Y.,) writes: "Will you please give me the benefit of your advice in the following circumstances. I have been grossly insulted on several occasions by a man who is paying his addresses to the same lady that I visit. I have given him no cause for it. It is simply jealousy because she favors me more than him. I feel like attacking him the next time he attempts it, and punishing him for his insolence. Would it be best to do so, or would the law protect me from his insults?" That depends somewhat on the character of the insults. You had better consult some legal authority. It is not advisable to make a personal attack on him, unless in self-defense. The law will protect you better than you can protect yourself.

Sailor Boy (Beaufort, N. C.,) asks: "I take the liberty to ask you a question, and hope you will be so kind as to answer. I have been a sailor for several years. I came to Beaufort lately. Since I came here I have fallen in love with a pretty girl, who loves me as well. Now the question is, should I marry her now, or wait until I can consult my parents who reside in Florida? You will oblige me by answering this in your next." You give no reason why you should marry in such haste. If you think it desirable to consult your parents, it surely will not consume much time to advise them by mail of your desire to marry, and to obtain their answer. If under age you should not think of marrying without consulting them; and even if legally a man it would be only proper courtesy to obtain your parents' advice on so important a step.

P. M. (Harbor Creek, Pa.,) asks: "In your answers to correspondents please tell me where I will find the passage, 'God tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb.' Also, why have Connecticut and Rhode Island two capitals?" You will find the passage in Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," in the section headed "Maria." The correct reading is, "God tempers the winds to the shorn lamb." The arrangement of the capitals of the two States mentioned, was made in Colonial times, and has not since been changed. In May, 1701, the Connecticut Assembly enacted that sessions should be held alternately at Hartford and New Haven. The Rhode Island arrangement of capitals originated in a political dispute in 1663, in which year two assemblies met, one at Providence and one at Newport. In 1664 it was arranged that there should be an Autumn session of the Assembly alternately at Warwick and Providence. At present there is an adjourned session held in Providence every January.

D. P. P., (Hunter, New York,) writes: "Having been long a reader of your delightful paper, the Post, I take the liberty of asking you a question, which, if you will answer through your answers to correspondents, you will confer a great favor on one of your most devoted readers. Who was the first designer of the American flag? This is a question which I have been long trying to solve, and look to you for a solution." It is not known who first originated the idea. It has been ascribed to the coat-of-arms of General Washington, though without sufficient reason. The first flag resembling the present was that called the Great Union Flag, which was raised by the army before Boston, on January 2, 1776. This probably had the stripes, but not the stars. As a stripe, or ribbon, was the army badge of the Boston army, that may have originated the idea. The present flag was decided upon by a resolution of Congress, passed on June 14, 1777. The only change from the previous flag was the introduction of the stars.

Mrs. R. P. H., of Michigan, is anxious that we should do honor to her state by locating there the poet Will M. Carlton. She informs us that he resides in Hillsdale, Michigan, instead of in Illinois or Indiana, as we supposed. The fact is, his notoriety is too recent for biographers to have become busy with his name, and we simply knew that he resided somewhere in that region. We are obliged for the information, and hope that it may meet the eyes of the party who desired it.

Laura (Massillon, Ohio,) writes: "Please answer in your Correspondents' column, the following questions:—Is there a school of design in Philadelphia? If so, give me the address. Also, the address of Mrs. Gleason, M. D." There is a School of Design in Philadelphia, which has the reputation of being moderately well conducted. It is located at the corner of Filbert and Merrick Sts.; Principal, Mr. Braidwood. Mrs. Gleason resides at the Water Cure in Elmira, New York.

Dunnoser (Blue Earth City, Minn.,) asks: "Please tell me, through your columns, the name of the best Medical Journal for a druggist of one year's experience?" There are several Medical Journals published in the United States, but we do not think that any of them is specially adapted to the use of a druggist. You had better obtain copies of the different Journals, and decide for yourself which is best suited to your purposes.

☞ The Prime Minister of Hungary, Count Andrassy, while in exile in London, supported himself by giving lessons on the guitar, and was often so poor that he went hungry and wandered about the streets of the great city all night, not having money enough to pay for a lodging.

RIDDLER.

BIBLICAL ENIGMA.

I am composed of 37 letters.
My 2, 28, 36, 18, 5, 14, is an island in the Levant.
My 4, 20, 33, 10, 26, 29, was a queen of Persia.
My 6, 22, 15, 5, 12, 21, is a city of Greece.
My 9, 20, 7, 5, 12, 23, was a Jewish measure.
My 12, 5, 2, 13, 6, 7, was a heathen idol.
My 18, 36, 2, 30, 6, 14, was miraculously restored to life.
My 21, 10, 11, 6, 3, 31, is a title of Messiah.
My 27, 25, 19, 5, 2, 35, were used in Jewish offerings.
My 34-16, 1, 24, 5, 2, was a kind of wood.
My 37, 25, 12, 32, 5, 17, was a distinguished prophet.
My whole is a verse in the Bible.

ISOLA.

CHARADE.

Lacking my *first*, the world were null;
My second from a tree you cull;
Yet wanting it, however sweet,
E'en billets-doux are incomplete.
Issues my whole from eastern throne,
And none can call his life his own.

RIDDLE.

Cut off my head, and singular I am;
Cut off my tail, and plural I appear;
Cut off both head and tail, and wondrous fact,
Although my middle's left, there's nothing there.
What is my head?—a sounding sea;
What is my tail?—a flowing river;
In ocean's greatest depths I fearless play,
Parent of sweetest sounds though mute forever.

WORD SQUARE.

A luminous body.
Not false.
Sea birds.
Repose.

Cobham. MRS. R. E. D. B.

WORD SQUARE.

To reward.
A malt liquor.
An affirmative.

Venango Co. JENKINS.

COMPOUND INTEREST QUESTION.

A young man when 21 years of age, became a member of a brotherly Society, by paying in $20 as an initiation fee, and paying afterward 10 cents weekly until he was 49 years of age. Now, if we reckon the year to consist of 52 weeks; and if his initiation fee at the outstart, and the weekly payments at the end of each year, have been put out on compound interest at 6 per cent. per annum, to what amount was he then entitled in said society?

DANIEL DIEFENBACH.

Kratzerville, Snyder Co., Pa.

☞ An answer is requested.

CONUNDRUMS.

☞ When is a young lady like a whale? Ans.—When she's pouting.

☞ Why is a tight-rope dancer like an epidemic? Ans.—Because he's poisin' in the air.

☞ Why is a woman tying her corset like a man drinking to drown care? Ans.—Because in so lacing herself, she becomes tight.

☞ What animals are admitted at the opera? Ans.—Puppies and white kids.

☞ Why are the ladies of Missouri so sweet? Ans.—Because they are *Mo*-lasses.

☞ When is a spoon like a pretty girl? Ans.—When in tea resting.

[Except it be senna tea; then the comparison would be simply madness—in-senna-tea!]

☞ How is it that trees can put on new dresses without "opening their trunks? Ans.—Because they leave out their summer clothing!

☞ Why was Eve not afraid of the measles? Ans.—Because she'd Adam.

☞ Why did Adam bite the apple? Ans.—Because he had no knife to cut it with.

☞ Why ought one not to joke about a queen? Ans.—Because she's no subject.

☞ What is Majesty deprived of its externals? Ans.—A jest (M-ajest-y!)

☞ Why is the Prince of Wales musing on his mother's government, like a rainbow? Ans.—Because it's the sun's reflection on a steady reign!

☞ Why was Louis Napoleon like a very wet day? Ans.—Because he rained as long as he could, and then—mizzled!

My first is myself in a short little word,
My second's a puppet, and you are "my third." Ans.—I-dol!

☞ What tree bears the most fruit to market? Ans.—The axle-tree.

☞ Why is an oyster an anomaly? Ans.—Because he grows a beard without a chin, and you take him out of bed to tuck him in!

☞ Tell us the difference between a good and a bad oyster? Ans.—One is a native, the other is most certainly a settler!

ANSWERS TO LAST.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC—

C	Curfew	W
E	Emma	A
N	Nil	L
T	Trout	T
E	Eagle	E
N	Neighbor	R
A	Atlas	S
R	Rustic	C
Y	Yuba	O
O	Orient	T
F	Flint	T

METAGRAM—Bound, found, hound, mound, pound, round, sound, wound.

WORD SQUARE—

QUAY
UNDO
ADAR
YORE

WORD SQUARE—

PIN
IRE
NET

RECEIPTS.

Brunswick Stew—A Virginia Receipt.—2 squirrels, 3 if small; 1 quart of tomatoes, peeled and sliced; 1 pint butter beans, or Lima; 6 potatoes, parboiled and sliced; 6 ears of green corn, cut from the cob; ½ pound butter, ½ pound fat salt pork, 1 teaspoonful ground black pepper, half a teaspoonful cayenne, 1 gallon water, 1 tablespoonful salt, 2 teaspoonfuls white sugar, 1 onion, minced small. Put on the water with the salt in it, and boil five minutes. Put in the onion, beans, corn, pork or bacon, cut into shreds, potatoes, pepper, and the squirrels, which must first be cut into joints, and laid in cold salt and water to draw out the blood. Cover closely and stew two and a half hours very slowly, stirring frequently from the bottom. Then add the tomatoes and sugar, and stew an hour longer. Ten minutes before you take it from the fire add the butter, cut into bits the size of a walnut, rolled in flour. Give a final boil, taste to see that it is seasoned to your liking, and turn into a soup tureen. It is eaten from soup plates. Chickens may be substituted for squirrels.